

African Violet Magazine

PT. 1950

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 1



RECOMMENDED

216781 For

Those Who
Appreciate
The Finest



WHITE GIRL

A SPOUTZ AFRICAN VIOLET



African Violets

LIVING COLOR FOR YOUR ROOMS!

This is the page to watch for, to tempt your purse . . . won't you treat yourself to the joy of adding at least one of these "must-haves" to your collection . . . to keep it up-to-date!

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Imagine a silvery mauve in the lightest tint possible, large flowers with no coarse markings; medium sized foliage, a profuse bloomer that is just exquisite. If you must limit yourself to one new variety - this is the one to buy! \$2.50

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Dear Customer:

We were glad to pack your order and hope you're pleased. Everything in this box is guaranteed to arrive in fine condition and if it isn't, please return promptly. My African violets will grow and bloom for you, just keep the Growing Instructions handy, included in every box we mail out. Remember, I'm anxious to please and ready to help because your African violet collection is very important to me. Jennie.

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Colors: Marbleized blue, yellow, green, red, ivory, lavender grey and rich bronze marbleized, with black bases.

FREE

FREE

FREE

FREE

We appreciate large orders by offering one free Wik-fed (regular size) pot as a gift if your order totals \$8.00. If its \$15.00 or more, we will include two Wik-fed (regular size) Pots in your package!



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MRS. JENNIE SPOUTZ

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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends:

Virginia Lee Gardens has a new name and address and henceforth will be known as the Frentzen Floral Gardens, 309 Lake Ave., Pitman, N. J. Congratulations and best wishes to you for your continued success Mr. Frentzen!

Please help me locate these members. Their magazines are being returned.

Mr. Harold I. Spence
55 Hanson Pl., Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mrs. A. C. Kettel
6720 N. Navajo Ave., Lincolnwood 30, Ill.

A million thanks to one and all for your wonderful help.

Most sincerely,

Alma Wright

The African Violet Magazine, is published quarterly by the African Violet Magazine Publishing Co., P. O. Box 1326, 201 W. Clinch Ave., Knoxville, Tenn. Entered as second class matter at Knoxville, Tenn., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Communications should be addressed to Executive and Editorial offices, Alma Wright, Editor, 4030 McCalla Ave., Knoxville 15, Tennessee.

Subscription price: To all members of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. \$2.00 a year, 50 cts. a copy, which amount is included in the annual membership dues of \$3.00. To all others \$3.00 a year, 75 cts. a copy.

Advertising rates: Quarterly \$3.00 per column inch. Yearly \$2.50 per column inch.

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On Your Vacation Stop In
To See Some Of The Newest

African

Violets

Saintpaulias

Our own introduction:

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274 Euclid Ave.
Long Beach, Calif.

African Violet Magazine



A Quarterly Publication

EDITORIAL STAFF

Alma Wright, Editor
4030 McCalla Ave., Knoxville 15, Tenn.

Mary Parker, Assistant Editor
Harrill Hills, Knoxville 18, Tenn.

Evan Roberts, Research Editor
355 N. Harrison St., E. Lansing, Mich.

Floyd L. Johnson, Advertising Mgr.
79 West Gibson St., Canandaigua, N. Y.

Arthur Chard, Art Editor
31 Jefferson Ave., Haverhill, Mass.

Maxine Wangberg, Club Editor
1920 West 3rd, Perry, Iowa.

Neil C. Miller, Mgr. Veterans Affairs
Layton's Lake, Penns Grove, N. J.

Contributing Editors - Boyce Edens,
Regina Gottshall, LeBerta Morgan,
H. G. Harvey

News Reporters - Harriett F. Lawton
Emily Hodan Daisy Jones
Warren Gottshall Phyllis Ferrall
Martha Mears Ruth Dahnke
Florence Foltz Lauretta L. Littig

Homing Pigeon Dept.:
Violet Berry, News Editor
710 E. 6th St., Mt. Vernon, Ind.
Gladys Canner, Membership Mgr.
Route 1, Creek Rd., Herkimer, N. Y.

OFFICERS

Mrs. Arthur Radtke, President
3334 Orion St.
Cincinnati 13, Ohio

Mr. Wm. E. Merkle, 1st V. Pres.
1238 Maple St.
Mentor, Ohio

Mrs. C. H. Harris, 2nd V. Pres.
757 Athens Boulevard
Los Angeles 44, California

Mrs. Martin Wangberg, Rcc. Sec'ty.
1920 West Third St.
Perry, Iowa

Mr. Floyd L. Johnson, Corrcs. Sec'ty.
79 West Gibson Street
Canandaigua, N. Y.

Mrs. Earl Mutchner, Membership Sec.
606 Richmond, Ave.
Richmond, Indiana

Mr. Boyce M. Edens, Treas.
2694 Lenox Rd., N.E.
Atlanta, Ga.

C O N T E N T S

Vol. 4 September 1950 No. 1

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Photograph by Robin

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President's Message

Annual Meeting



Never underestimate the determination of an African violet fan! This was demonstrated once again at the annual convention in Philadelphia, the 12th & 13th of May. In spite of the railroad strike there were nearly four hundred present. Some drove their own cars, some flew, some went by bus and others went by coach, a few sitting up all night. None of us knew just how we would get back home but I believe we all made it. The meetings were well worth all the effort and sacrifice necessary to get there.

Here we are with one fine Convention just over, in fact those of us who were there are still enjoying thinking about the splendid talks and the beautiful displays. We are looking forward to Dayton, planning already for a bigger and better meeting next year. One great accomplishment was the work done by the Show Staging Committee. Their explicit directions for staging a show together with the suggested schedule will be a boon to many who are struggling with plans for their first show.

There is also a great need for qualified judges in different parts of the country. This is to be our next project. The same committee, Mrs. James Carey, Mrs. Frank Parker and Mrs. Ott Rule, who gave us such a comprehensive report on shows has consented to work on plans for training and qualifying judges. It is planned that those interested in judging, meet at convention headquarters, The Dayton Biltmore Hotel, on Wednesday, April 26, 1951 for an all day meeting. (The convention is to be Friday and Saturday April 27 & 28.)

Meanwhile, the committee is working on plans for instructing and qualifying judges. They will welcome your suggestions . . . Do send them to Mrs. James Carey, Garden Ave., Fountain City, Tenn.

We have many interested and hard working members but none has contributed more to the success of our Society than Alma Wright and Boyce Edens. Mrs. Wright works tirelessly on our magazine. Mr. Edens was our first treasurer and when it became necessary to have a Registration Committee he gave up his office to take over this important work. We depend heavily on his excellent counsel in all matters of importance in the affairs of the Society.

We were all very pleased then when the Awards Committee under the chairmanship of Mrs. Z. C. Layson presented to Mrs. Wright and Mr. Edens an Honorary Life Membership in our Society. Our hearty congratulations and best wishes to them.

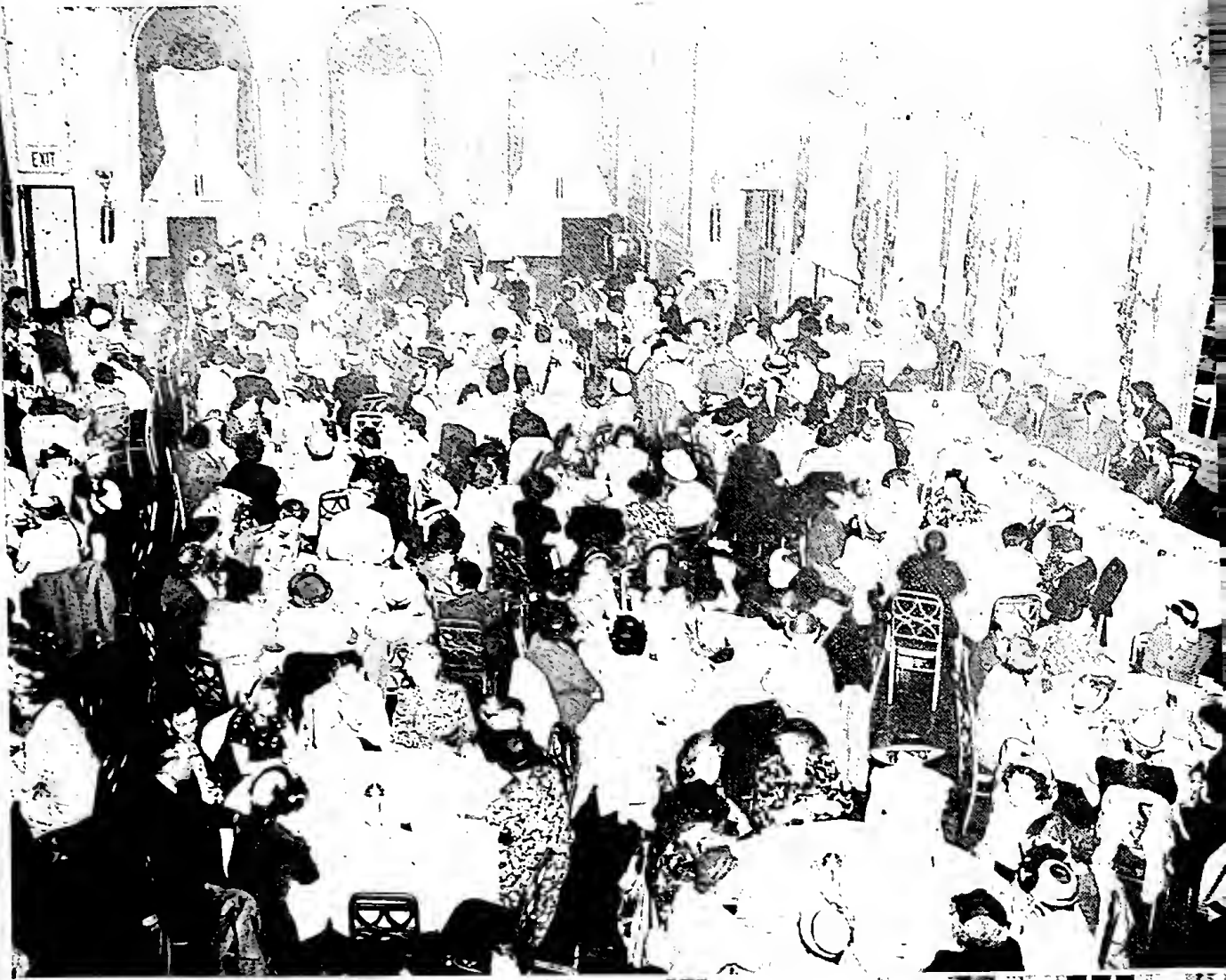
Our membership continues to grow by leaps and bounds, as does the popularity of our favorite plant, much to the amazement of many horticulturists. All I can say is that any one who is not growing African violets just doesn't know what they are missing!

Vacation time is over and most of us are ready to settle down to regular routine again. May this be a very successful growing season for all.

Sincerely,

Myrtle Radtke

at the Philadelphia Luncheon Meeting





African Violets - - -

on Display at the Convention

Ruth Dahnke, Kan.

The plants displayed at the Convention would stimulate the interest of one who has collected African violets for many years as well as one who has just started. Now we believe anything can happen. Kewensis no doubt looks down on her grandchildren and wonders just what is happening to this new generation. They are certainly not like their parents.

Competition always makes a show interesting but when the plants are seedlings, displayed by the originator, it is really worth seeing. Would you like to view that part of the show with us?

First place went to Leve Birds, owned by Mrs. Homer Foltz. The flowers were a shade more pink than orchid with the two top petals much darker. The leaves were deep green and broad with the center vein lighter green. The plant was very well shaped. Second place went to Helen Wilson, originated by Tinari's. It has a dark blue double flower and beautiful girl type foliage with the spot at the base of the leaf large and deeply scalloped. Third place was awarded Seedling Z, displayed by Mrs. Jessie Lewis. The flower was lavender in a shade rather new to African violets; the leaves were medium green and slightly quilted. Seedling Y received fourth place and was also owned by Mrs. Lewis. It had girl type foliage but very round rather than heart-shaped leaves and the spot at the base of the leaf was not white or even cream; it was red. The veins out into the leaf were red as well as the stems. It did not have a bloom. Both of Mrs. Lewis's seedlings were small because they were only eight months old. Honorable mention was awarded Oriental, originated by Mrs. Ott Rule. The large, very spooned leaves were so red on the underside they gave the deep green surface of the leaf the effect of being black. The flowers were dark blue. The combination of color was certainly Oriental.

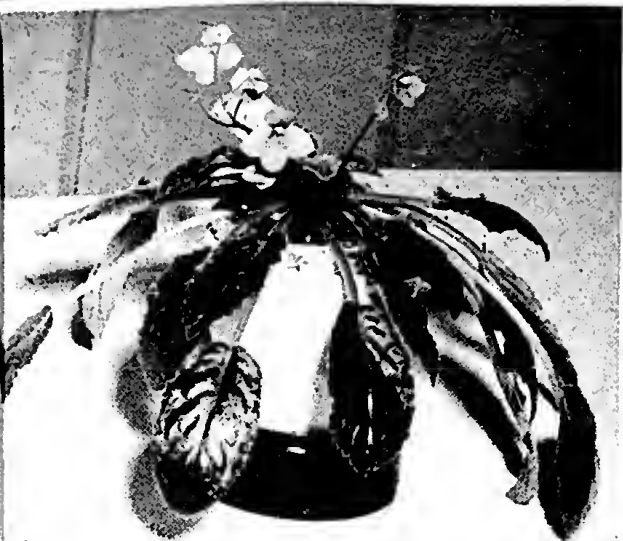
The judges must have wished for more ribbons for so many lovely plants left without awards. Mrs. Neil Miller's lavender seedling M-101, had long, wide and very wavy leaves of dark green. The true lavender flowers were so in abundance one wondered how they had space to open. Tinari's No. 44 double seedling had large dark green, smooth leaves that were very red underneath and many double flowers



Love Birds above

M101 below





Blue Longifolia Crenulate



Rippling Blue

nestling between and over the leaves. Mary Parker's Pastel Girl had very dark green foliage. The white spot was large with white veins running out into the leaf. The flowers were a soft orchid with the two top petals darker. This was one of the best girl type plants. America, by Tinari's was that beautiful light blue of Blue Flute and good duPont foliage.

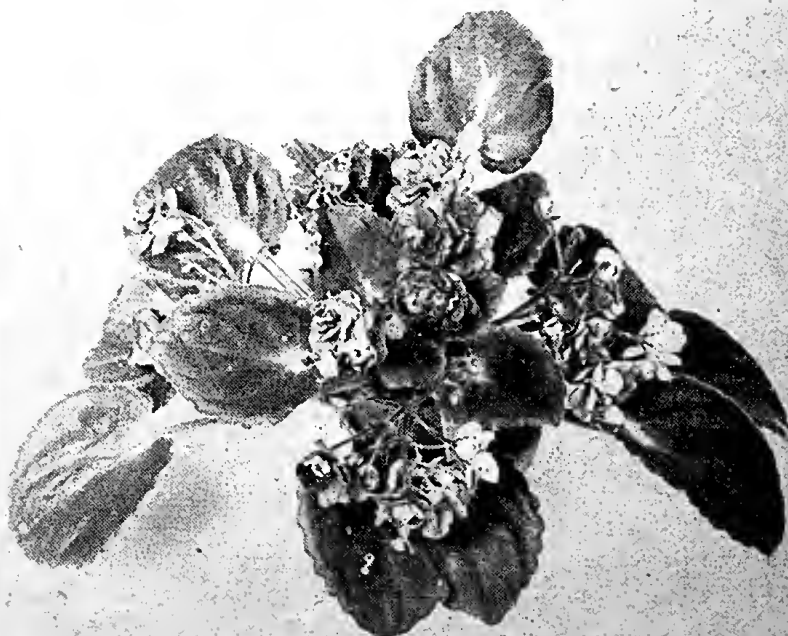
Evelyn Doell's Rippling Blue was another of the very long waved foliage, so popular. The flowers were not quite as dark as Blue Boy though it is a sport of Blue Boy rather than a seedling. Mrs. Russell Foley entered Blue Longifolia Crenulate with long oval shaped leaves and very long petioles. The flowers were medium blue. The plant was grown from seeds sent from England. Iridescent was another of Mrs. Ott Rule's plants and had flowers lavender toward the edge with an overlay of a slightly deeper shade really

giving an iridescent effect. The foliage was medium green. Those lovely Mentor Boy flowers are acquiring many variations. William Carter displayed Mentor Girl, a lovely plant with very good foliage and should have a place with Mentor Boy in your collection. Mrs. Watson Green's Queen of Hearts has compact girl type foliage, large white spot and long-flower stems. Miss Tennessee had foliage similar to Pink Girl with an unusual shade of lavender flower. Black Satin was a good name for that deep, deep green plant. If our notes are correct both of these plants belong to Mrs. Ott Rule. Mrs. H. Rufsnider entered a very beautiful plant with girl type foliage in a lighter green and a very light blue flower.

continued in December

Helen Wilson

Iridescent





Mr. Carter, Mr. Miller, Mrs. Hardy, Mrs. Layson, Mr. Edens, Mr. Johnson

"Stump the Experts"

Florence T. Foltz, Pa.

The "Stump the Experts" Quiz Program held during the breakfast meeting of the Fourth Annual Convention of the African Violet Society of America on Saturday, May 13, 1950, was a complete success with one exception. (Did Neil Miller find the person who disagreed with him?) A large question box was placed in the lobby on Friday, and members were invited to submit questions. Mrs. Bess Hardy, editor of Garden Chats Radio Program on Station WHIO, Dayton, Ohio, very capably acted as Quizmaster for the panel of experts composed of Mrs. Z. C. Layson, Maysville, Ky., Mr. William Carter, Tewksbury, Mass., Mr. Floyd Johnson, Rochester, N. Y., Mr. Neil Miller, Penn's Grove, N. J., and Mr. Boyce Edens, Atlanta, Ga.

The first question was, "What do you do with people who say, Why doesn't my violet bloom?" Although many people might be of the opinion that they should be lined up and shot, the experts sug-

gested that the person be asked what he is doing with his violets. Some violets will react favorably to some treatments, unfavorably to others. Try different exposures, find out what it likes and treat it accordingly. Do not over-pot. Mr. Edens is of the opinion - though it hasn't been proven - that some plants are barren and never will bloom. How about a good shock in the refrigerator? It worked for me!

"From what part of the plant is it best to take a leaf for rooting?" Mr. Carter suggested taking a leaf that is not too hard, nor too soft, and advised putting it in water long enough to puff it up good before putting it in the rooting medium.

Mr. Edens gave us a booming "No" when asked, "Is it true that potbound plants make for more bloom?" A question of interest to many people was, "What makes blossoms and buds drop?" Mrs. Layson said that fuel gas can cause this, also keeping the house closed up too tightly with not enough fresh air.

"Which is best, - repot an old plant, or cut off the root and grow new roots?" In his inimitable way, Mr. Edens remarked, "You CAN cut off the roots and re-root the old plants in water, but don't fall in love with them. When they are old enough to die, bury them and grow yourself a new plant."

"In the Spring, when the heat is turned off in the house, is it wise to cut down on the moisture in the air to help control crown rot?" Mr. Edens noted that most homes have too little humidity rather than too much. Mr. Miller believes that extra care must be taken, and Mr. Johnson suggested that the plants be carefully watched and treated accordingly.

Mr. Henry Peterson was selected from the audience to answer the question, "At what temperature do you sterilize soil, and for how long a period?" He suggested 180 degrees for 30 minutes.

"What causes leaves to curl? Some do and some don't with the same care." The consensus of opinion was, - it is natural for some to curl. Leaves of white varieties may curl more in strong light because they are more translucent than other varieties. "And when they're fixin' to die, they curl," added Mr. Edens with a grin.

"Should seeds be kept warm, or can they be in a cool place while germinating?" Keep them warm, with bottom heat and give them plenty of light.

"What makes plants wilt, - besides touching the rim of the pot?" It could be not enough water. If they still wilt after having been watered, suspect root nematodes or some disease which might enter the plant at the point of the injury by nematodes. It could be root or stem rot and if such is the case, cut off all old roots until you find good healthy stem, then re-root in water. Finally, it was noted that some plants wilt when certain people visit them!

"Will saintpaulias be scented in the future?" was answered with another question by Mr. Miller, "When we return home from a funeral, aren't we glad they don't have a scent?"

"What are the little white wigglers that one sees on top of soil when watering plants, and what harm do they do?" They may be springtails or garden centipedes, but it would be best to consult an entomologist and follow his suggestions.

"Why couldn't a wild yellow violet be used to pollinate with a white to make a yellow violet?" This was discussed at length, and Mr. Miller asked, "Why not try to make a new species of hawks by crossing sparrows and crows?" Mrs.

Layson said, "We don't need yellow violets. There has always been a scarcity of blue flowers and that is one of the reasons why the African violet became so popular". If you want to cross with something yellow, Mr. Edens suggested using RAMONDIA or some of the new smaller Gloxinias which have the basic yellow tones. Both these plants are members of the plant family to which the African violet belongs; the wild yellow violet is not.

"I am at a loss to diagnose hard brittle centers; they are never MITE when sent to be examined, yet they look sick. What is it?" Mr. Miller explained how mite goes way down in the center of the plant, and many times a water bath or spray will kill mite on the leaves but not down in the heart of the plant. Some examiners do not know where to look for them. Mr. Edens, who one time lost a whole greenhouse of plants with mite, said, "If you have white or yellow hard curled center leaves, YOU HAVE MITE, - throw the plants in the garbage can!"

"What will happen to plants if super-phosphate and bonemeal are both added to the soil?" They are basically the same, but bonemeal acts more slowly.

"Will the new hydroponics tend to induce more mutations than we have found to date?" NO, because hydroponics is nutrition and mutation happens within the plant structure.

"What is the best treatment for Stunt?" evoked some disagreement among the experts. Mr. Miller asked, "Is there such a thing?", adding that it might be mite damage. Mr. Johnson believes we DO have a condition known as stunt, and he told of a dealer who had a number of plants (with stunt) "come back" and grow normally after being treated with sodium selenate. Mr. Edens thinks it might be a symptom rather than a disease, - many things might be wrong. Mrs. Layson agreed, saying, "It's what might be called a pathological condition".

"Why can one person grow violets standing in one or two inches of water, while another person faces failure almost as soon as the plants are over-watered?" After some discussion, it seemed that the condition of the soil, drainage, etc., was the main cause of success or failure.

"What causes a petiole to split or form an enlarged end while in water?" Mr. Carter believes it to be "the nature of the brute."

"In a club, how long a term are the officers supposed to serve?" Local conditions govern each club, but the officers

Continued on page 50



S. Diplotricha

Photo by Brian Perkins

Species Nomenclature of the African Violet

Continued with Special Attention to the

Species *Saintpaulia Diplotricha*

(INCORRECTLY KNOWN IN THE UNITED STATES AS *SAINTPAULIA KEWENSIS*)

Harvey Cox, California and Evan Roberts, Michigan

Saintpaulia diplotricha—B. L. Burt comes from the East Usambara Mountains in Tanganyika Territory, East Africa. It is located 15 miles north of Mt. Tongwe, the mountain from which *Saintpaulia tongwensis* gets its name. *S. diplotricha* is found growing in the region of the sacred mountain, Mt. Mlinga at an altitude of 1,000 to 3,600 feet on gneiss. The situation favored by *S. diplotricha* is more moist than that of *S. tongwensis*. In cultivation *S. diplotricha* appreciates more water.

When the genera *Saintpaulia* was originally introduced to Germany from East Africa two closely allied species, *Saintpaulia ionantha* H. Wendland and another which was not first recognized as distinct were included.

Ernst Benary, the first commercial African violet grower (see *The African Violet Magazine*, Vol. 3, No. 3, page 7) was first to notice that the seed introduced from East Africa by Baron Walter Von Saint Paul-Illaire, produced 2 kinds of plants. One kind produced long capsules and the other nearly round-shaped. The plant producing the round-shaped capsules was the one H. Wendland described as *Saintpaulia ionantha*.

C. B. Clarke tried to distinguish between the two kinds in 1906 in the *Flora of Tropical Africa* but unfortunately, the true *S. ionantha* was redescribed and given a second name, *Saintpaulia kewensis* C. B. Clarke and the second species was incorrectly called *S. ionantha*.

Continued on next page

THE SECRETARY REPORTS

The Fourth Annual Business meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. was called to order on May 13, 1950 in the Rose Room of the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, Broad Street at Walnut, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

There was a moment of silence in honor of the memory of Miss Marion Thomas, well known Robin Director of Flower Grower Magazine who passed away on January 19, 1950.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

For the Period

April 30, 1949 to May 7, 1950

Balance in the Treasury, April 30, 1949	\$6,369.48
INCOME	
Membership Fees	\$12,771.10
Sale of Back Issues of the Magazine	700.41
Advertising	842.50
Registration Committee	78.00
1949 Convention	304.99
Postage Return due to 2nd Class Permit	133.58
Total Income.....	14,830.58
	<hr/> \$21,200.06

EXPENDITURES

Publishing Magazine	\$ 9,386.40
Stationery and Supplies	1,141.49
Postage	695.86
Telephone and Telegraph.....	385.06
Registration Committee	551.78
Advertising	154.35
Membership Fees Returned and Adjusted	55.50
1949 Convention	168.28
1950 Convention	450.92
Miscellaneous Expenditures.....	506.00
Total Expenditures	<hr/> \$13,495.64
Balance in Treasury May 7, 1950	7,704.42
On Deposit with the Treasury for a Scholarship Fund.....	400.00
	<hr/>
Grand Total on Deposit with the Citizens National Bank, Alexandria, Va.	\$8,104.42

In addition to the above there is on deposit with the Postmaster, Knoxville, Tenn., \$50.00 as required by the 2nd Class Permit for Mailing the African Violet Magazine.

On recommendation of the Board of Directors it was voted by the members to accept Mr. Gottshall's resignation as Treasurer with sincere regret.

Also on recommendation of the Board the Society voted to accept the re-written Constitution and By-Laws.

The invitation to the Society by the Dayton, Ohio and Richmond, Indiana Societies to hold the 1951 Convention in Dayton was extended by Mrs. Ralph Berst of Dayton and Mrs. Earl Mutchner of Richmond. The Society accepted the invitation and Mrs. Berst was appointed convention chairman with Mrs. Mutchner her assistant.

A vote of thanks was extended to Mrs. Schadewald and her many committees for their work in staging the displays and the many details which made this Convention an outstanding success.

Following this came the election of Officers. Officers chosen to take office on January 1, 1951 are:

President,	Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Cincinnati, Ohio
1st Vice-pres.,	Mr. Floyd Johnson, Spencerport, N. Y.
2nd Vice-pres.,	Mrs. C. H. Harris, Los Angeles, Cal.
Rec. Secy.,	Mrs. W. P. Dahnke, Merriam, Kansas.
Membership Sec.,	Mrs. Earl Mutchner, Richmond, Ind.

SPECIES NOMENCLATURE OF THE AFRICAN VIOLET

Continued from page 12

In the years following, the application of these two names became reversed and *S. ionantha* was again identified by its correct name. The plant called *Saintpaulia kewensis* was therefore incorrectly named. B. L. Burtt of Surrey, England gave the second species a name in 1947. He named it *Saintpaulia diplotricha* because of the covering of two kinds of hairs on the leaves. This species is the long-fruited kind mentioned by Benary in his original stock of *Saintpaulia*. Plants which resemble the one in the photograph should be called *Saintpaulia diplotricha*.

The technical description of *S. diplotricha* as found in The Gardners Chronicle (London), July 19, 1947 is as follows:

"*Saintpaulia diplotricha*, B. L. Burtt, sp. nov., a *S. ionantha*, H. Wendl foliis piliis brevibus dense obsitis et insuper aliis longioribus praeditis, fructibus cylindricis 1-1.3 cm. longis villosis leviter falcatis recedit.

Tanganyika Territory. Usambara, 1,-000 m., 26 Nov. 1895, Buchwald 149."

Subscribers to The African Violet Magazine should correct the title of the description of *Saintpaulia diplotricha* as it appears on page 20, Vol. 2, No. 2, under the heading of *Kewensis*. The name *kewensis* should be deleted and *S. diplotricha* inserted. At the end of the paragraph it should be noted that this species becomes a very large plant if it is allowed to produce multiple crowns.



View of peat bog. Peat has been recently removed from space where open water shows.



Peat in solid mass, drying on beds. L single row at upper center is humus cut and processed separately.

For Peat's Sake

PHILIP L. MAPLES
Geneva, N. Y.

A Study of the Origin, Processing and Grading of an important Organic Material

This story reprinted with permission of the Merchandiser is recommended as club program material - Editor

Long ages ago a dark-skinned aborigine shot his flint-tipped arrow into a fleeing rabbit on the margin of a black water pool in upper central New York. Food was short and the hunter rushed to recover his quarry. His practiced eye told him it was but a few short yards from a blood stained tuft of marsh-grass where the missile found its prey. Three long strides had taken him there when he suddenly sank to his hips in a clammy ooze.

Last week we picked up that arrow-head as we fed a golden-brown mass of fibrous peat through our shredding machine on its way to make the difference between just another garden and one in which the owner can take pride.

Some tens-of-thousands of years ago the retreat of the Great Ice Sheet which had covered most of the Northern Hemisphere, left a great number of saucer-like depressions in the face of the land. Where drainage of surface water was blocked, marshy pools were formed.

In that cool, humid climate sphagnum and lichenous mosses soon began to grow on the shallow margins of those pools. Their intertwined but rootless stems crept outward until through succeeding generations they gradually formed a porous but strongly matted deposit which held the surrounding water captive. In many instances the moss completely filled the saucer-like pool.

As the surface of the morass strengthened, it gave foot-hold for the thread-like roots of sedges, reeds and cat-tails. They grew on the surface of what had now become a bog. The remains of these plants in their turn helped to build a higher, stronger foundation on which birds, small animals and winds joined to plant the seeds of larger growths.

Right at this point the bog's possible future value is first revealed. If the bottom of the water basin consists of marl, limestone or other mineral matter of an alkaline nature the peat will be alkaline in character and worthless for horticultural purposes. If, on the other hand the underlying material is acid in character,



Peat curing in windrow on beds.

Photographs by Phil Maples II

the bog will preserve and maintain this acidity, encouraging the growth of such plants and flowers as are useful and valuable to mankind.

At this stage, if climatic conditions are favorable, cranberries, blueberries, raspberries, pitcher-plants and other small shrubs begin to grow—their remains add to the ever-building accumulation beneath. These plants are followed and sometimes accompanied by the final evidence of the bog's maturity in the form of maple, ash, birch, cedar, pine and other trees.

Not all of the peat bogs in this country have by any means completed this cycle of growth. Many will never complete it, since a changing climate has created new conditions which interrupt the cycle.

In general, the basic and essential growth for the formation of a peat bog of this type is one or more species of the sphagnum mosses. These rootless unicellular plants require a cool, humid climate such as was general in this country following the last Ice Age. Quantities of sphagnum moss can still be found in the northern United States and Canada but their heyday is past. Each year in the Temperate Zone, conditions seem to grow slightly less favorable for future growth. Despite this, throughout most of our country there exists peat deposits which increasing need and improved production methods may bring into practical development as time passes.

Now that we have our peat, what's it good for? By far the most valuable



View of processed peat and shredding operation.

constituent of soil is its organic matter. Every flower petal, every carrot, every blade of grass that grows, takes organic matter from the ground.

Before our forefathers came to the western hemisphere, nature replenished herself from the decaying residue of each summer's growth. Fertile land became richer with each winter's mulch of decomposing vegetation. The advancing civilization of the white man has reversed the process.

Surrounded by lushness on every hand, our new world heritage was built on destructiveness. Our forests were burned, our wild life wantonly destroyed and our agriculture established on the basic principle of taking all and giving nothing in return.

As the land became barren, it was abandoned. The planter moved westward to virgin soils where the process was repeated until no more new land was available. Today this nation faces an alarming deficiency in soil humus.

Just a few years ago, vast areas in our midwest were rendered uninhabitable. A succession of dry seasons found the land depleted of its organic material by improper agricultural methods and our great "wheat bowl" turned almost overnight into the vast "dust bowl". And this is only the beginning unless we change our ways and give back to the land the organic matter which it must have if it is to continue fruitful.

In many cases replacement of depleted organic matter by the use of an adequate amount of peat, is followed by a remarkable return of fertility in the soil. Peat itself is nearly pure organic

matter, the stuff that plants are made of and that soil must have to be productive.

There are many other sources of the organic matter on which plants grow sturdy and thrive, but stability of structure as shown by peat's slow rate of decomposition, is the feature which makes it unique. Rye, frequently grown as a mulch crop, wheat and oat stubble, corn and sugar cane stalks; all contain valuable organic matter and are frequently used as soil conditioners with excellent results.

Composts made from all forms of vegetable matter, when properly matured, are successfully utilized by many home gardeners whose neighbors enviously accuse them of having a "green thumb."

Humus, the term usually used for well decomposed vegetable matter, whether taken from the top of a peat bed, the surface of a forest floor or land held from cultivation, is another popular source of organic matter. All of these materials are available and render much the same service as does peat, but all of them fall short in stability. After two or three seasons of cultivation they are gone from the land and continual replacement is necessary. In most cases these replacements cost more than supplying the soil with the much longer lasting organic matter contained in good peat.

Moreover, in small plantings such as the home lawn or garden, the cleanliness and convenience of peat are often decisive factors.

As a mulch to keep down the growth of undesirable weeds, or to protect valuable shrubs and plants from winter damage, peat is not only effective but adds materially to the appearance of the garden and is preferred by discriminating users.

We are frequently asked, "If I use peat in my garden can I discontinue the application of fertilizer?" Our answer is, "If you need fertilizer before you used peat, you will need it afterwards." If this seems a cryptic reply it is because it is so intended. Peat is not a fertilizer. It is advisable to continue the use of some good plant food with peat, because generally it will be found essential to feed the growing plants if maximum results are to be obtained.

To be of value as a soil conditioner, peat should be acid in character. It must be free of harmful mineral salts. Colors range from light tan to deep chocolate brown. Although it is not always true, the darker colors are usually associated with advanced decomposition of the material. The more youthful deposits of

sphagnum and sedge peats are most likely to show the lighter colors. The more mature bogs, especially those containing considerable peat formed from the reeds and rushes, usually produce the darker shades.

Contrary to popular opinion, color is not in itself an indication of quality but must be considered along with texture and chemical characteristics.

Acidity, perhaps the most important factor in chemical composition, is indicated by the arbitrary symbol pH used in conjunction with the figures 1 to 7, the first indicating extreme acid and the latter neutral. The best peats for horticultural purposes range from pH 3 to pH 5.5.

The peat should be from 90% to 98% pure organic matter. Nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and calcium are frequently present in small amounts but are not readily available to plants. This is because of the slowness with which peat decomposes when incorporated into the soil—the same slowness that makes the peat more valuable than other forms of organic matter.

Everyone knows that some forms of peat have been used for many years as fuel in some of the countries of Europe. Many people in this country believe the peat we use for horticultural purposes is the same material, but it isn't. This erroneous idea probably started because until recently, most of the horticultural peat used on this side of the ocean, came from the "Old Country."

After World War I, U.S. exports increased. Shipping lines were confronted with the problem of empty bottoms in ships heading westward, so they combed the Continent for anything of value that could be used to load the ships for the homeward trip. In 1919, importers brought to this country 464 tons of sphagnum moss peat in this way. They found such a ready market that their shipments were increased to 2,762 tons the following year. In 1930 this traffic had grown until it required 95,028 tons to meet the demand. Year after year it has continued to increase. The annual value of peat importations now is in the millions.

In the early years, there was no commercial production of peat in this country. But as more and more people learned how this organic material helps soils depleted by our wasteful method, it was found that we had similar deposits right here at home. Today, from Florida to Maine and from New Jersey to Oregon, the production of horticultural peat is an established and ever

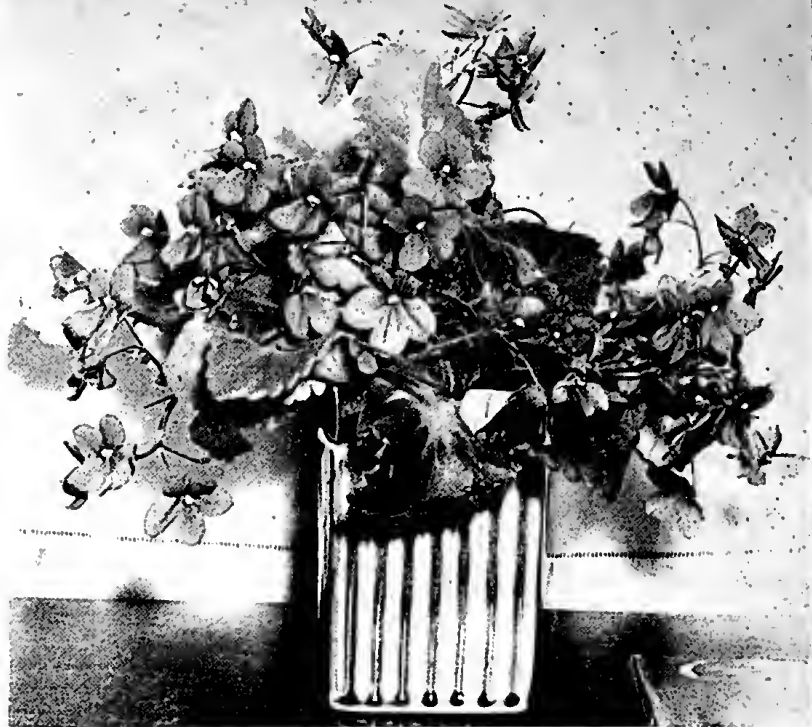
continued on page 28

Ceramic

Containers

Floyd Johnson, N. Y.

All this in 2 Years as the
outgrowth of a hobby



Orchid Girl is attractive in a green planter.

It was NOT "one contented evening" but one of the worst days of a Northern winter when I started out to make a social call on James Starkweather of Topping Hill Craft at Rush, N. Y. If I had not written ahead - I know that I would have questioned the advisability of venturing out.

However, after traveling country roads with snow piled higher than the car along the sides, and blustery gales blowing snow across the highway so that visibility at times was near "zero", I arrived to find our good friend very busily at work in his comfortably warm plant.

Perhaps many of you will remember the two-piece plant containers which were exhibited at the Philadelphia show and which proved so adaptable for African Violets. By the size of the plants in the pictures one can see that they are indeed adaptable. Of course, he showed many other items of his original ideas in ceramics which have literally taken the country by storm. But, we are principally interested in the two-piece containers as shown.

These are very simple containers. They need no wick. Plants are watered by capillary action and these planters can be used in your windows and placed on your tables with the positive assurance that there will be no "white water spots" or any other damage to your table or table cloth.

All the ceramic pieces are fired in one of the largest electric kilns in the East. These are individually handled from the time they are molded until the pieces are taken out of the kiln and eventually shipped to many of the largest cities in the East.

Truly, it is a business which started with a lump of clay and has grown to a very thriving industry!

Mr. Starkweather





Mrs. Preston's Interesting Window Garden

Meet Miss Harriet

Nellie W. Preston, Va.

A good many years ago I chose for my favorite window garden plant, the African violet, because of its ease of culture, its attractiveness and almost continuous bloom which is most desirable in all window garden collections. After twenty years, it is still my first love among my plants, having taken the place of many of the once-prized plants, which did not adjust themselves as readily or as permanently as have my African violets.

I first started with a few varieties as they were not so plentiful then as they are today, though they were very beautiful and their lovely bloom and healthy foliage always challenged me to search for more.

Then I began starting leaves and soon my windows were full, other plants were taken out to make more room for violets and when the first leaves rooted -- often

giving as many as six little plants from a leaf -- I was urged on. Soon my window shelves were overflowing. I began giving them to friends and neighbors and to shut-ins in the hospitals - but still they multiplied. Then I became interested in collecting new varieties, and at one time or another have had most all of the newer ones. Some of them were good, others were discarded - so after all these years, they are more interesting than ever, and the urge to experiment stronger than when I began to grow them.

About two years ago I had my first experience with raising plants from seed but nothing developed from that experience that was unusual. But violet enthusiasts are never discouraged, they keep right on working, so about fourteen months ago

I ordered another package of seed from a commercial grower and planted according to directions as I had done before. After weeks of waiting (not too patiently) there was still not a vestige of a sprout of any kind in sight - but in another week or so I was rewarded with many tiny green things - a sight known so well to all of those who have waited and at last have experienced that same thrill. If you have not already tried it, I invite the readers of this article to give it a try (full information for sowing seed given in November 1949 issue of *Flower Grower*.) Among the seedlings in the second lot was one very unusual looking from all the rest. It was ready to be transplanted into a small pot much earlier than the others so it was carefully taken out and put into a small clay pot and set in a saucer over which I inverted a fruit juice glass. It really thrived in its little glass house and grew rapidly and rewarded me with large bright blue blossoms at ten months of age and today at the age of fourteen months has been transplanted three times to larger sized pots, and is at present in a five-inch pot with a leaf spread of nineteen inches across. Many of the individual leaves measure five

inches long and three inches wide. This plant has a distinct foliage pattern. It differs from any I have had among mine or any I have seen among other collections.

Naming my plant was now my problem as it was old enough and well-deserving of a name, so one morning as I was working with my violets and racking my brain trying to think of a suitable name, my eight-year old grand-daughter came in and took her sprinkling can to help water the small plants. I said, "Harriet, you help me think of a good name for this new violet." She suggested several names but none seemed to be appropriate. Then I said, "How about naming it for you?" which, of course, pleased her very much. So the new seedling was christened "Miss Harriet", the name a little friend always called my grand-daughter, (at the age of five) when he rang the door bell to call her out to play.

So I heartily commend to you my experiment with seed and agree with Mrs. Wright that "It's more fun to grow African Violets from Seed."

Mrs. Preston's grand-daughter "Miss Harriet" and her namesake.





The Homing Pigeon

(By action of the Board of Directors, new members joining the Homing Pigeon after July 31, 1949, must be members of the National Society.)

THE HOMING PIGEON SPEAKS

NEMESIS

At fixing a pfitzer I'm
fairly adept;
At spraying spirea I'm
passable;
At salvaging salvia, not
to inept,
Nor hopelessly, wholly
irascible
When forcing forsythia.
Let it be said
I prune a persimmon with
pleasure;
I cultivate cabbages so
that they head,
Raise roses in riotous
measure;
But, so help me Hannah,
one plant is my doom;
I can't make an African-
Violet bloom!

—Arthur Frederic Otis

HOW TO HANDLE PLANTS THAT HAVE BEEN SHIPPED AND OTHER TIPS ON GROWING THEM

Young plants received through the mails should be potted into vermiculite, peat, or a combination of the two and not flooded



VIOLET BERRY

Homing Pigeon

News Editor

with water until the plants are adjusted. More plants are rotted at this age from over-watering, than are lost from lack of water. Unit 5, Warren Gottshall, Va.

When I bought some plants from a greenhouse—I put the pots in a large saucer and watered well, then turned a large fish bowl over them. This forms a tiny greenhouse over the plants. Gradually remove it and the plants will not go thru the shock of being transferred from a humid greenhouse to a dry atmosphere. I have heard of using a plastic hat box for the same purpose or a small tent of clear cellophane. Unit 66, Bertha Human, N. Y.

You who are short on window space—try growing them under fluorescent light. I have 3 fluorescent lights now—all 2-40 watt daylight type—these are 50 inches long. You can just see violets grow under them. Get the white reflector type or you will loose too much light. Use the daylight bulb. Unit 102, Ferne Kellar, Iowa.

My husband put up some lovely glass shelves for me. I have 5 of them altogether. They are windshields taken from old cars and he got them in junkyards. They are heavy enough to hold plants and can be tiered and let the light thru. They are curved of course on one side, but he put the curved side next to the window and it doesn't show. Unit 42, Mrs. Virginia Gould, N. Y.

Add Phosphoric Acid to potting soil for better bloom. A reason for sucker growth on plants—plant is kept too dry and too cold. Unit 15, Helen Smith, Pa.

TYPES OF LEAVES USED IN ROOTING AND HOW TO ROOT THEM.

The best leaf for rooting is a young one, the closer to the center of the plant the better and preferably one that has developed a petiole of not more than an inch and a half. You get more plants and better ones. I have taken first leaves (those wee little things are about the size of a dime and without characteristics) from young seedlings and raised on an average of eight or nine plants at a time from them. Old droopy outside leaves definitely are not good. They take too

long to reproduce and are usually spindly when they do come. Leaves when received through the mails are best if recut and soaked in cold water for a day or two. If recut they should be allowed to heal for about 12 to 24 hours, regardless of the condition of the leaf. Limp leaves can be completely submerged in cool water for about 24 hours until they become firm. It doesn't harm them a bit but rather does them a world of good. Unit 5, Warren Gottshall, Va.

I have rooted several leaves using only the top half of the leaf. I set the cut edge on damp moss and fastened them with hair pins and small plants started all along the cut edge. Unit 71, Mrs. Myrle Straub, Minn.

I planted a lot of leaves and made up a "sort of" flat, using an old apricot box. I put screen wire in the bottom to keep the sand from sifting out, then a lot of coarse gravel for drainage. I filled this with mica and planted the leaves in rows. Then to keep them from falling over and to keep the rows straight, I drove nails in the end pieces and tied strings across the box. Scotch tape with the label underneath it was placed at the end of each row. Unit 61, Aletha Sturdivan, Iowa.

I always select extra nice deeply notched leaves of the girl varieties to root and over a period of time one can work up a very nice form by doing this. Unit 86, Mrs. Raymond Tidd, Ohio.

Take a piece of yarn, dip in coal oil, tie it around a gallon jug tightly, then light one end. It will burn around. Plunge the jug in cold water, tap it and it will break off. Try it—this makes a grand container in which to grow leaves. Unit 75, Mrs. J. C. Keithly, Mo.

One lady uses Transplantone when transplanting seedlings or babies when separated. She uses 1 level teaspoon Transplantone powder to 1 standard measuring cup of water. Shake well and add 2 tbs. of this mixture to 1 quart warm water. Soak rooting medium with this mixture. Make holes and put leaves to root. Firm rooting mixture around stems. Do not water again with Transplantone. Start using Hyponex water once every 2 weeks. She lost 3 leaves out of 100. Worth trying! Unit 3, Louise Smouse, S. C.

WHAT IS BEING DONE TO CONTROL PESTS

Sodium Selenate will not control spring-tails. These are better controlled with naphthalene or moth balls laid in the saucer or you may spray with a weak solution of Black Leaf 40—and I mean WEAK SOLUTION! Or you can make a light suds in warm water and swoosh your plant, pot, leaves, blooms and all thru it and then rinse it in clear warm water. This will do the trick and won't harm the plant in any way, if you do not allow it to sit in the suds, but quickly draw the plant thru them. Unit 12, Grace Eyerdorn, Ohio.



GLADYS CANNER

Homing Pigeon

Membership Manager

If you wish to join a group, or if you wish to withdraw from one, please communicate with Mrs. Canner.

The men folks went to a meeting on pest and weed control for farm crops. They were told when using spray to be very careful to change clothes before going near "MA'S" African Violets as the fumes from their clothes would kill the violets. Unit 12, Mrs. Virgil Swarm, Iowa.

I add Rose Dust to soil. This dust has sulphur fermate, D.D.T. and rotenone (65, 10, 5, and 1%). All the insects crawl out in a hurry. Unit 15, Margaret Darr, Tenn.

In cleaning up my violets about every two weeks, I wash out the little bowls, I stand each pot in with a solution of water in which I put about a teaspoonful of lysol or creoline. Before placing the pot back into its bowl I also dip the bottom of the flower pot in the same solution, wipe dry and set in place. If there are any spring-tails, they immediately vanish. Unit 10, Florence Allen, Ohio.

The easiest way I know to get rid of mealy-bugs is to place a lighted cigarette in an ashtray in the bottom of a metal wastebasket, set the plant in and cover until the cigarette burns out. Unit 30, Eleanor May, Pa.

AN AFRICAN VIOLET TRADING POST

You send the list of varieties you are willing to exchange leaves from and the kinds you are looking for and enclose a penny post card for an answer. I do the rest—I will write you where you can locate your leaves. Address inquiries to—Mrs. Carl Olson, West Grove, Pa.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PIGEON EDITOR

Please keep writing about your experiences, new ideas etc. By this time you know what we want.

Do you like OUR column? Drop me a card and let we know how you like it or dislike it. At the same time include any new idea or tip that you know of.

I'll be listenin'.

Sincerely,

Violet Berry, Pigeon Editor.

Registration Reports

Boyce M. Edcous, Chairman

PART 1.

Since our Plan of Registration was established over a year ago it has been necessary, from time to time, to sympathetically refuse registration of quite a number of alleged new varieties of African violets; because it seemed to us that all of these varieties were either duplicates (identical twins without a Toni) of other existing varieties, or they too closely resembled other existent varieties in some respects, or that they were not definite improvements in one or more important characteristics over other existing varieties of the same or similar type and color.

This past experience indicates only too well that far too many of those who sought to register and were refused did not understand the basic purpose of our Plan of Registration, i. e., to accept applications for registration only of those varieties that are distinctly different in one or more important characteristics from other existent varieties and/or that are a definite improvement over other existent varieties of the same or similar type and color.

The beneficial reason back of this basic purpose is to register by one name and one name only each variety of African violet that is sufficiently different and distinct from other named varieties. As rapidly as this is achieved—and it is obviously going to take a long time to completely achieve it—our members will be protected from acquiring duplicated or near duplicated varieties, by buying or acquiring through gift only those varieties that have been registered with the Society.

The reasonable safeguards which the Society has established and will continue to establish to prevent registration of duplicated and near duplicated varieties are not infallible by any means. For some time to come, and perhaps always, we must rely largely on the expression of individual and collective opinion in determining the extent to which one variety differs from another. Human opinion is always subject to variation and difference. For example: Three persons who greatly admire a certain named variety of African violet may share the same opinion as to the color of its bloom, the tint and shape of its foliage, and its form of growth. While a fourth person, not enamored of the same variety and with a keener and more discerning eye, may have a somewhat different opinion as to the color of its bloom, the tint and shape of its foliage and its form of growth.

Thus it is that, at times, we may seek diverse opinions in our effort to determine the extent to which one variety of African violet differs from or is a definite improvement over other existing varieties. We, therefore, seek your opinion—if you have formed an opinion based on adequate observation and experience—as to whether any of the following varieties are duplicates or near duplicates of other existing varieties. Then, too, we also earnestly invite you to advise us if for any other reasons you object to the registration of any of these following nineteen varieties on which applications for registration with the Society were received during the period from March 15, 1950, to July 15, 1950.

All of these additional applications for registration are thus published in accordance with Section 19 of our Code of Rules For Nomenclature and Registration (revised). Objections to the registration of any of these nineteen varieties should be adequately detailed in a letter addressed to the Committee on Registration, 2694 Lenox Road, N. E., Atlanta 5, Georgia. All such letters will be treated with the confidence that such communications always richly deserve.

ROSE ONNA MAPLE,
Mrs. Rosa O. Peters,
Grand Rapids, Mich.
March 15, 1950.

ROSA ONNA SWIRL,
Mrs. Rosa O. Peters,
Grand Rapids, Mich.
March 15, 1950.

WYNKEN,
Mrs. Frank G. Parker,
Knoxville, Tenn.
March 9, 1950.

BLYNKEN,
Mrs. Frank G. Parker,
Knoxville, Tenn.
March 9, 1950.

RED WAVES,
Mrs. George F. Pendleton,
Kansas City, Mo.
April 1, 1950.

HOOSIER MAID,
Mrs. William T. Mears,
Anderson, Ind.
July 1, 1950.

SNOW STORM,
Mrs. Alex. E. Taylor,
Nashville, Tenn.
May 15, 1950.

ORCHID BALLET,

Mrs. Ned Blair,
Joplin, Missouri.
May 3, 1950.

GWEN,

Mrs. Sidney Martin,
Washington, D. C.
April 2, 1950.

NOD,

Mrs. Frank G. Parker,
Knoxville, Tenn.
March 9, 1950.

WONDER STAR,

Mrs. L. D. Thalhimer,
Long Beach, Calif.
April 1, 1950.

PETER PAN,

Mrs. William T. Mears,
Anderson, Ind.
July 1, 1950.

MAROON,

Mrs. Fred P. George,
Temple City, Calif.
April 27, 1950.

MAMMOTH RED,

Tinari Floral Gardens,
Bethayres, Penna.
July 11, 1950.

L. M. BYRNES BLUE,

Sister M. Felicitas O. S. B.
Birmingham, Ala.
March 30, 1950.

CRYSTAL QUEEN,

Mrs. Lela Reichert,
Omaha, Nebr.
May 2, 1950.

PIED PIPER,

Mrs. William T. Mears,
Anderson, Ind.
July 1, 1950.

McFARLAND'S BLUE WARRIOR

SUPREME,
George P. McFarland,
West Chester, Penna.
June 16, 1950.

BLUE LONGIFOLIA CRENULATE

Mrs. Cora Ogelby,
Newtown, Penna.
April 28, 1950.

PART 2.

We have received, but not yet formally accepted, applications for registration of the following twenty-four varieties of African violets most of which are apparently of recent or fairly recent origin, and doubtless are not yet distributed on a Country-wide basis. Insofar as we are informed these varieties have not yet been introduced by way of being offered for sale in the sales lists and catalogs of either wholesale or retail dealers and growers throughout the Country.

But doubtless most of them have already enjoyed local or sectional distribution. For this reason we cordially invite you to write us in sufficient detail your description of any or all of these additional varieties, and outline clearly in your letter in what way you feel that anyone or all of

them differ from or are improvement over other existing varieties they resemble. Of course, you either should have grown to maturity a plant of any variety you may write us about or have the opportunity to observe a mature plant of any variety grown by someone else in your community. This assistance of our membership will be genuinely appreciated and their letters in this connection will likewise be treated with deserved confidence.

We cannot too strongly emphasize that we are not inviting anyone to "Snoop." Far from it! Our invitation to furnish this Committee with the indicated earnest and honest opinion is one of the ways in which we seek the collaboration of our members in the job that is before us. In other words

"It isn't the individual nor the Army
as a whole,

But the everlasting teamwork of every
blooming soul."

May we emphasize that the applications for registration of these twenty-four varieties have not yet been accepted by this Committee, and that further consideration of each one of them will be continued to a definite conclusion.

BLUE DELPHINIUM,

Mrs. C. L. Hixson,
Atchison, Kansas.

CHALICE,

Mrs. C. L. Hixson,
Atchison, Kansas.

LESLIE,

Mrs. C. L. Hixson,
Atchison, Kansas.

MARTHA LOU,

Mrs. F. M. Richardson,
St. Joseph, Missouri.

ROSY RED,

Mrs. Frank Oros,
Wadsworth, Ohio.

MARDI-FUSCHIA,

Mrs. Milton Eckhardt,
Baltimore, Md.

CRAZY PLUM,

Mrs. Vernon S. Bottrell,
Springfield, Ill.

ORCHID LADY,

Mrs. Ruby Rains,
Gainesville, Fla.

BLUE DIAMOND,

Mrs. C. L. Hixson,
Atchison, Kansas.

CHARLES,

Mrs. C. L. Hixson,
Atchison, Kansas.

RED FEATHER,

Mrs. C. L. Hixson,
Atchison, Kansas.

MARY SUE,

Mrs. F. M. Richardson,
Saint Joseph, Missouri.

WESTERN GIRL,

Mrs. Carolyn K. Rector,
San Pedro, Calif.

continued on page 43

TO THE SAINTPAULIA QUESTION

Ruth Dahuke, Kan.

Members and friends who missed hearing Mr. Paul Frese speak at the convention are most unfortunate; trying to bring his talk to you from notes will be most inadequate but better than missing it entirely. Mr. Frese needs no introduction to African violet collectors as most of us know him as the former editor of "Flower Grower" and now the editor of "Popular Gardening" Magazine. Mr. Frese is one of the most interesting after-dinner speakers we have had the pleasure of hearing. He held his audience from the time he was introduced until he completed his talk. From the notes:

"The African Violet Society has established the most remarkable record of any individual plant society; the membership has reached just under five thousand in a little over three years, BUT you have a tiger by the tail! Innocently starting out with a few saintpaulias you find out they are easily grown from leaf cuttings. Happy days are here! You begin swapping leaves to increase your collection. By now your success in growing plants has filled the living room, dining room and kitchen. Next they have invaded the husband's bedroom. What an interesting experience to find you can grow them from seeds. You plant a few pods and grow thousands of beautiful seedlings. You simply must have a greenhouse, then out goes the shingle and the husband has to quit his job to help.

Helen Van Pelt Wilson's book, "The African Violet," has done much to create interest.

When the report of the first Atlanta Show reached me telling of the large crowd, and police being called to direct the traffic, I was surprised. The pictures of the show created even more interest. . . . Why the barriers? Upon inquiry it was found African violet leaves are so brittle they break if accidentally brushed against. It would be a shame for the leaf to die. Any woman attending an African violet show without a large pocketbook is not properly equipped! Attendance records at African violet shows have been repeatedly broken. At the Rochester show such crowds came to see the exhibit the doors had to be closed so that only so many could be admitted at one time. This suggests the need for many regional shows. The strength of the organization may well come from small groups.

Do not let the success of these amazing saintpaulias go to your head. There are other good houseplants. Anyone who mentions a Begonia at an African violet convention risks being thrown out. Begonia varieties number in the thousands. Interest dates back before the turn of the century. Some collectors specialize in one type, such as Rex Begonias.

Gloxinias are African violet's closest competitors. They have been developed

with leaves nearly a foot long and flowers five inches across, even in maroon with a white edge. These plants were developed in Connecticut.

Many new varieties of African violets are being developed but you should work with a plan. Do not develop varieties with leaves too large; it would cost too much to mail them. On a recent visit with Mrs. Wm. K. duPont, she said she was working for better color in light and dark blue, larger flowers with substance in the flower itself.

Variety registration is a step in the right direction. People want to know what they are growing. If there is just a slight variation don't name it for dear Aunt Jenny. Try for large flowers, many to a stem and many stems of flowers. Strive for startling difference in color; true blues and true reds are needed. Try for good leaf pattern. If possible breed out the brittleness in leaves so they may be moved more easily. Distinct breaks might be one important objective, bi-color flowers, variegated foliage, ruffled blossoms, crinkled leaves and a full line of doubles. Then there is the desire for that dream come true—a yellow African violet. We would welcome a statement from a scientist, after surveying the entire field, as to the possibility of a yellow African violet.

If anything will make African violets unpopular it will probably be insects. Gladiolus took quite a setback because of the invasion of thrips and it was not corrected until the introduction of D.D.T. No commercial grower can afford to send out plants unless they have a clean bill of health.

But there is your side of the saintpaulia question and it is the best side. You have a plant that has everything in your favor. You can take a quick look and marvel at its beauty as you do your housework. It can be grown in very little sunlight and in limited space. Care has been less difficult because of the new materials such as vermiculite and the subirrigated pots to help them grow. With little attention they bloom the year around. The African violet is always busy producing new leaves and flowers. Part of the success is because we can plant a leaf and watch a new plant grow from it, right in the kitchen window! Then you write letters, plan vacations to visit other collectors and swap leaves; you try to outdo your neighbor . . .

You have representatives here from as far north as Maine, as far west as Colorado. (These boundaries were disputed by ten members from Canada and one from California.) From as far south as the Gulf and as far east as the Atlantic Ocean, saintpaulia enthusiasts are present.

May you continue your success with African violets."

HAVE YOUR PLANTS CYCLAMEN MITE?

Harriet F. Lawton, Mass.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." It is less trouble to prevent mite than it is to cure it when it once gets started. This last however, is by no means hopeless but it does mean faithful and constant work.

1st: Prevent trouble by adopting a regular spray program.

2nd: Learn to detect the very first symptoms of mite on plants infested by them.

3rd: Then, spray and spray and spray!

The mite is too small to see with the naked eye and hard to locate with the microscope because of the twisted foliage in which it lodges. I can do no better than to quote from letters sent me by Dr. Smith, Sr., Entomologist at our Government Station at Beltsville, Md. Suspecting trouble and having been misadvised on the diagnosis of these plants, photos were taken and enlargements sent to Dr. Smith. Not knowing the trouble, my entire stock of over 200 plants, (on three different floors) became infected. Many looked beyond repair. Some of Dr. Smith's replies to my inquiries follow.

"The photographs and your letter describe very well the various stages of Cyclamen Mite on vigorous Saintpaulias. After the mites have destroyed the tender young tissue on the central young leaves, they either die or disperse because they are unable to subsist on the older leaves."

"Large vigorous plants can survive an attack by mites, however younger plants with less reserves in the outer leaves may die when the central leaves are similarly attacked."

"The Cyclamen Mite requires rather humid conditions. These conditions are met in the folds of the hairy young leaves even though the plants are grown on the dry side. By withholding water you would reduce the growth rate of your plants but the mites would most likely persist. Buds

and flowers harbor the mite as well as the young leaves. If your plants are separated a few inches in your constant water-level pan, the mites are not likely to spread by their own action. The mites do not survive for more than a day if not in contact with living plant tissue. It would not seem necessary to disinfect the window ledges and surrounding areas in attempts to eradicate mites."

"If your plants tolerate the dip in the rotenone preparation you mentioned, the immersion of the plant and flower pot would be more thorough than a spray application. Very few sprays are not injurious to plant tissue."

"Mites are not known to attack the root system of African violets or other plants. Plants injured by mites are generally weakened. The young leaves in the crown become functional upon enlargement and replace declining older leaves. If these young leaves are lost through mite attack, there is a corresponding decline in the formation of elaborated food for the whole plant. This, of course would affect the roots."

Upon Dr. Smith's diagnosis of "Mite", I sought Alma Wright's advice for treatment of plants and used the "dip in" method Dr. Smith mentions.

There are several good sprays on the market. In my case I used the rotenone spray N.N.O.R. (many swear by Optox and others). The spray should be used in the strength as recommended on the bottle. Mix sufficient in a pail, (use tepid water) and submerge pot and plant until foliage is covered. Let stand until bubbles cease to come to surface. Continue through entire stock. If water becomes objectionably dirty, or if solution gets so cool it will spot foliage, mix a fresh solution. Let plants dry in shade. Repeat every week for three weeks. Then use as spray every three or four weeks as a preventive.

This spray will discolor the blossoms but not the buds. When used as a preventive when mite has been cleared up, spray right down into the heart of the plant and so avoid discoloring blooms on longer stems. In spraying, use fairly hot water as spray cools considerably in passing through the air and before contact with the plant. Spraying may be done in

Continued on Next Page



1. First indication of mite infested plants is seen by a lightening in color of the center foliage of crown. These young and tender leaves turn to a sickly, yellowish green.



2. Buds, blossoms and leaves (note bud stem all out of place). Buds have little or no growth. Normal growth is shown in picture.



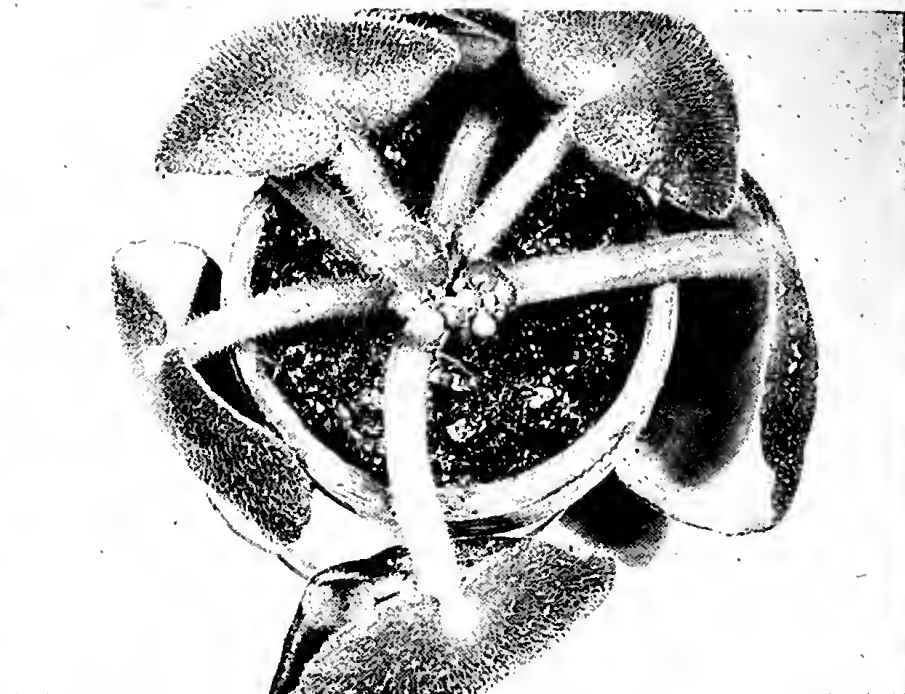
4. Center leaves eventually die and some stems are affected as shown above. These withered leaves should be carefully picked out with tweezers to make room for new growth, and stems affected as shown should be cut away.



5. Multiple suckers often grow from plant to single crown by cutting them away. Select one of the healthiest suckers to grow old crown.



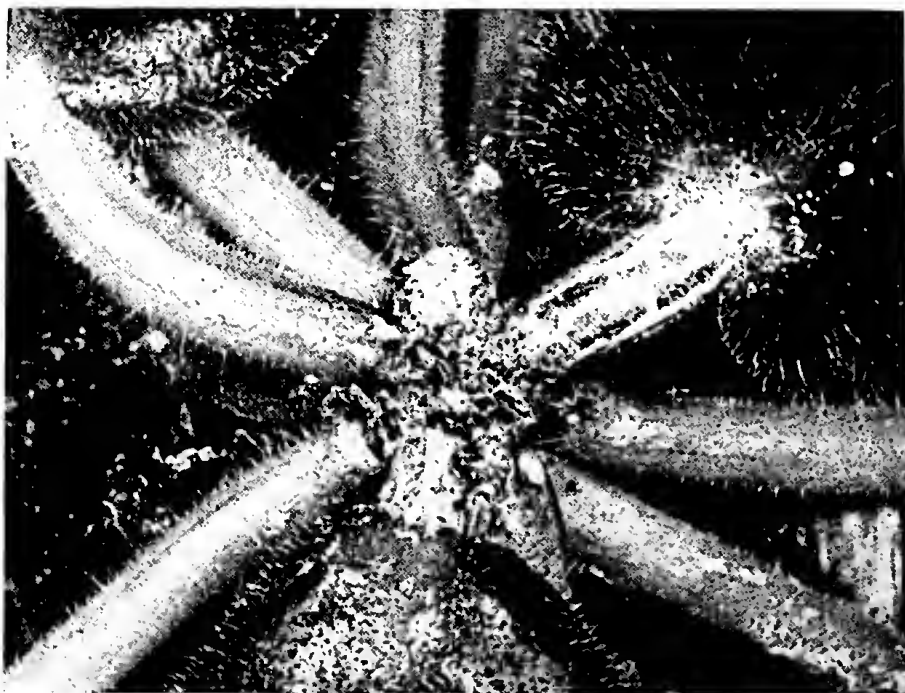
am stems become distorted.
portions at its base). Some
as that in lower part of
ases.



3. Large leaves on some plants curl and twist and become brittle as are the center ones on this plant.



ce the dead crown. Train
g away all but one sucker.
d one nearest the center of



6. New growth replaces the old. Carefully cut out distorted older leaves and affected stems.

the bath tub if done in the home. This rotenone spray is harmless when in contact with people externally and it will not stain the porcelain of the tub. When emptying out the solution it can be poured through a heavy cloth bag to catch the residue and the rest can be poured down the drain.

Dr. Smith advises against dipping if plant tissue is impaired. It is true, this dipping does injure plant tissue at the base of the mature petiole, and these eventually break or wilt at that point. But, in an advanced stage of mite, I believe this is the only way. Spraying is a good preventive measure but not as sure as the dip-in for a cure of advanced mite infestation.

It will often be a sucker that one must train up into a new and mature plant, cutting off all side shoots, keeping plant to one main stem. With the large leaves gone, plant often looks like a young one, but give them time; a large percentage of plants will survive. It is better to destroy plant tissue on the older leaves and to kill the mite. When the mite is once destroyed, then one can pay heed to building up healthy plants and keep them so.

During the period of convalescence, do not over water. Keep slightly on the dry side, giving only what water poor roots and the small top growth can consume. When active new growth starts, repot into fresh soil and a clean pot, using a pot in keeping with the "new" size of plant. Trim off much of dead or brown roots with sharp knife and sink main stem of plant down into pot to cover bare portion of main stalk from which leaves have been cut away. Increase water supply as roots and top growth can consume it. Do not feed during this time.

There is no set rule for which plants may survive an attack of mites and which may die. Some of my healthiest plants succumbed while some of the weaker pulled through. Extreme cases should be thrown out but if one cares to bother, even these may pull through!! Remove all suspicious plants. Do not dip plants for more than three times at weekly intervals, and then spray regularly!!

I did not discover my stock had mite until late October and they were then in the advanced stages. In early April plants were in bud and bloom. I lost some but a comparatively small percentage. It is worth the trouble.

It is my hope that in the following issue I may have an article, caption style showing photographs of specimens in the early stages of mite, progressive stages and the results one may reap with careful care in treating the ailment.

FOR PEAT'S SAKE

Continued from page 16

growing industry. Mechanical methods are rapidly replacing tedious and expensive hand labor, and the acceptance of peat as a leading soil conditioner is becoming widely recognized.

In the expansion of this new industry some misconceptions and malpractices developed. Not all peat is suitable for horticultural uses. Some deposits, because of excess alkalinity or because of saturation by certain metallic salts, are actually detrimental to plant growth and much harm has resulted from their use.

Itinerant dealers have done yeoman service in preaching the benefits of using peat moss and many of them are intelligent and experienced horticulturists. But among them unfortunately are others who have little regard either for the ethics of their business or the welfare of their customers. There is increasing evidence of their use of worthless and sometimes harmful products to extort excessive prices from the unwary.

All of us like to do business with our neighbors. Other things being equal, we prefer to make our purchases through an established local merchant who will be at his place of business to counsel, guide and assist us. We rely on his knowledge of his merchandise because we know he can continue in business only with repeated purchases insured by respect and good will in the community. It is only when local distribution fails to meet the existing need that the peddler and the itinerant dealer is able to carry on successfully.

That such a situation now exists in the merchandising of peat and its related products is unfortunately true. As this is written, a hearing is pending before the Federal Trade Commission on the establishment of trade practice rules for the peat industry. It is proposed that fixed definitions be established to identify materials offered for sale as soil conditioners. Prohibition of deceptive use of trade names or trade marks; misrepresentation as to ownership or control of production; misleading statements as to standards; combinations or coercion to fix prices, suppress competition or restrain trade; and discrimination as to prices, rebates, refunds etc., are among the items to be considered.

The fact that such rules are needed is proof enough of the importance of this new and expanding industry.

SHOWS

FLINT SHOW

The Flint African Violet Society held its second spring African violet show on April 19 and 20, 1950, at the Flint Institute of Arts Building, Flint, Michigan.

Mrs. Frank Dilley was chairman, and Mrs. William Jaynes and Mrs. Charles Knapp acted as co-chairmen.

The theme of the show was "Mid-Century Violets," which was lettered in purple against a golden background. A 30-foot, four-tiered table displayed violets from 1890 to 1950. The violets on this table were dressed in gold jackets.

The "Queen of the Show" was Lady Geneva and as a queen she truly reigned supreme. Her dark blue blossoms with white twinkling edge fascinated one and all. Lady Geneva's owner is Mrs. Guy Stewart.

The two largest plants displayed were Mentor Boy and Red Bi-color grown by Mrs. John Ballou and attractively dressed in silver and pink jackets.

A miniature blooming blue duPont violet displayed by Mrs. Frank Dilley caused a great deal of comment.

In the educational displays were the native habitat table in charge of Mrs. Herbert Beavis, which depicted the origin and history of the saintpaulia. An arrangement of ferns, moss, and rocks, with a miniature body of water held an antique sailing vessel filled with baby violets. Ribbons running to maps of Africa, Europe and U. S. A. gave the travelogue which the violet has followed.

The propagation table consisted of a display showing various methods of growing violets from seeds to blooming plants. Different soil mixtures were given. Tiny pots of seedlings were also shown. Mrs. Phillip Elliott and Mrs. Clarence Palmer were in charge.

The Clinic, in charge of Mrs. Ralph Ellsworth, consisted of the following departments: Pharmacy, Surgery, Isolation, Water and Exposure. Pharmacy gave suggestions on using alcohol, dusting sulphur, fermete, etc. Surgery displayed various tools used in taking care of violets such as razor blade, tweezers, toothpicks, etc. Isolation—all diseased plants such as thrips, mealy bugs, mite, etc., were isolated after treatment. Another department was "How to Make Your African Violets Bloom," and showed various fertilizers, etc.

A tiered blonde maple table held a violet representing each of the seven chapters in the society, namely: Ionantha, Trilby, Neptune, Amethyst, Topaz, Sapphire and Viking.



Show committee and display

One table covered with gold and purple cloth held a beautiful arrangement of violet china interspersed with many different varieties of violets.

Another table was called the "Jewel Table," which was pyramidal with shades of green and violet to palest lavender tulle, holding masses of jewel tone violets.

An outstanding display was "Our Favorite Girls on Parade." The girls were arrayed on a garden path dressed in ruffled colonial skirts matching their blossoms. Girls present were Mentor Girl, Pink Girl, Orchid Girl, Sailor Girl and White Girl.

Proving the value of the African violets for decorative purposes there were three table arrangements: A black and white table with a white linen cloth centered with two black ceramic cranes holding White Lady Violets, flanked by White King Violets, a black place setting completed this display; a pink and brown table with a pink linen cloth centered with two Pink Beauty violets flanked by brown figurines of Romeo and Juliet, with Russell Wright china in brown; a table laid with a purple cloth centered with a Blue Girl Amazon with packet of gold, surrounded by gilded coal representing gold nuggets, and a place setting of gold china.

Each member wore an attractive violet blossom designed of purple art paper inscribed with her name, which was presented to the group by Mrs. Fred Serr.

Mrs. Samuel Thompson and Mrs. James Gardner greeted the guests, asking them to register in the guest book, as well as presenting each guest with a poem which was furnished through the courtesy of Mrs. Alice Bryant. Mrs. Christine Retzlöff presented each guest with a violet leaf which was contributed by the members.

Music was supplied by Mrs. Marguerite Brooks, Mrs. Marie Powell, Mrs. Harry Kroh.

KNOXVILLE SHOW

The Tennessee Valley African Violet Club was organized in May, 1949, and the first show was held April 11, 1950. This was the first competitive show ever held in Knoxville, Tennessee.

One hundred and one entries were cleverly arranged on long tables around the club room. Of particular interest was a table devoted to African violet arrangements for special occasions such as tea table, blessed event, and Maypole arrangements. One table displayed soil combinations, fertilizers, and propagating methods. Mrs. Lloyd D. Johnson was in charge of the show.

Presiding at the tea table were Mrs. M. A. Sharp, president of the club, Mrs. D. E. Richards and Mrs. D. S. Turner.

Tri-color ribbon was awarded to Mrs. Esther McCloud for best plant in the show and sweepstake prizes were awarded Mrs. D. S. Turner and Mrs. Lloyd Johnson.

TECUMSEH, NEB., SHOW

The Saintpaulia Society of Tecumseh, Nebraska, held its first Flower Show at the Hopkins Hotel on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, April 22 and 23.

There were 209 entries of 115 varieties of African violets. These included the My Lady Series, the new Fringettes, and Gypsy Series.

There was a charming little merry-go-round of blooming plants and a culture and propagation table.

Approximately 400 viewed the display, and visitors came from 28 different towns in Nebraska as well as from Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri.

ROCHESTER SHOW

The second annual show of The African Violet Society of Rochester and Vicinity was held on May 7th at the Memorial Art Gallery. Doors were opened at 2:00 p. m., and nearly 7,000 people crowded the various galleries before 9:00 p. m. At times in the afternoon it was necessary to close the doors as the people were coming faster than they could satisfactorily see the violets. To quote a newspaper report: "All afternoon a line four wide stretched from University Avenue to the Gallery doors."

There were 375 beautiful plants exhibited in the cultural classes and 45 entries in the decorative classes. The cul-



From left to right, Mr. Raymond T. Fox, Mrs. Arthur Radtke, Mrs. Frank Copeland and Mr. Karl E. Lewis.

tural classes were very capably judged by Mrs. Arthur Radtke of Cincinnati, Ohio; Mrs. Frank Copeland of Port Credit, Ontario, Canada, and Mr. Karl E. Lewis of Lockport, N. Y. The Decorative Classes were judged by Mr. Raymond T. Fox of Ithaca, N. Y.

Queen of the Show Award (best plant) was given to Mr. Henry Ten Hagen of Warsaw for his very fine plant of duPont Lavender Pink variety. Sweepstakes award was given to Mrs. Fred Flory of Geneseo for winning twelve blue ribbons.

Another special feature of the show was a separate class for Juniors. Miss Joyce Wilkins took a blue ribbon in this class.

The second division of the show was devoted to the Decorative Classes. Shadow boxes, luncheon tables, tea tables, brass containers, terrariums, driftwood, novelties—all vied to be honored with African violets in various arrangements, adaptations and suggestions.

The detailed display on propagation and the various commercial exhibits were again very popular.

Mrs. Watson S. Green of Rochester was Chairman of the show.

WISCONSIN SHOW

The distinction of sponsoring the first African Violet Show to be held in Wisconsin was earned May 5th when the Eau Claire Garden Club held an all-day session at the Lincoln-Mercury Garage. Approximately three hundred interested flower growers, both commercial and home growers, attended the show and viewed about 300 plants exhibited by local and out-of-town gardeners.

H. J. Rahmlow, secretary-treasurer of the State Horticulture Association, Professor Beck of the University of Wisconsin and Mrs. Edward Uecke of Eau Claire, judged the exhibits.

Special award for the champion plant of the show went to Mrs. F. C. Daub, Eau Claire; second award went to Mrs. L. W. Grier, Altoona Lake; and Mrs. J. A. Davidson, Eau Claire, won third award.

SAN GABRIEL SHOW

A "Red Letter Day" in the San Gabriel Chapter of the African Violet Society was the First African Violet Show to be held in California, with over 500 plants, and arrangements from miniatures to an arrangement twenty inches in diameter. This show was held in March of 1950 at the Story Park Club House, Alhambra, California. Mrs. Walter Lattin a non-member won the sweepstakes award for the most perfect saintpaulia on display.

California comes in for another first, Ted and Mary Banks, of San Gabriel, California have coined a phrase "Violet Sitters." It is possible for any one wishing to take a vacation for a day or for months to do so without worry about their plants. The Banks will keep a watchful eye on them in their glass-house at a nominal cost. The first year of the San Gabriel Chapter has been very successful under the leadership of Mrs. Ernest Mackey, President, who has been appointed to succeed Mrs. C. H. Harris, as Regional Director for the States of California, Nevada,

Mrs. Rubel with Mrs Mackey's prize winning plant.



Oregon and Washington. This society closes its first year with a membership of 100 members.

The chapter has an opportunity table at all meetings as a ways and means project, and members and non-members may buy everything from soil mixture to finished blooming plants.

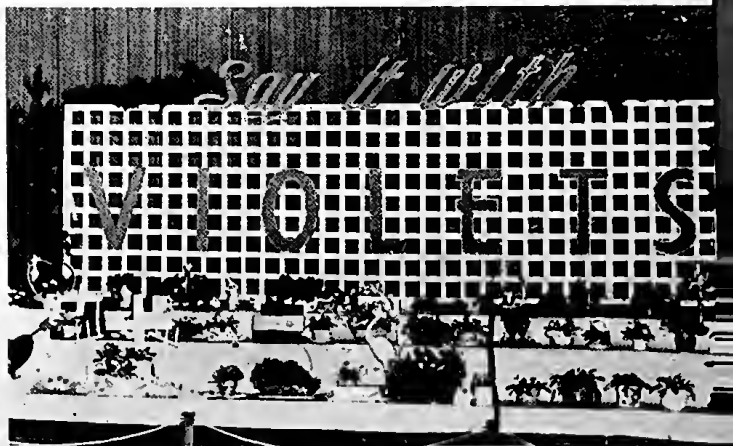
SPARTANBURG SHOW

Spartanburg, South Carolina held its first African Violet show on Thursday, April 20, 1950 at the City Recreation Center. Mrs. E. R. Thayer was chairman of the show. It was open to the public from 2:30 until 9:30. The register showed 650 visitors which proved that South Carolina has its share of African Violet lovers.

As the visitors entered the auditorium their eyes beheld a vision of loveliness. On either side were light grey tiers which held the specimen classes. These classes and sections were divided with purple ribbons. The focal point carried out the theme of the show, "Say it with Violets," and had as its setting a lattice work of grey with letters of purple. Beneath this was the artistic class displayed on tiers of grey. One section carried out six special occasions such as Easter, May Day, Mother's Day etc., much originality being displayed by the exhibitors. The other section was a display of violets in unusual containers. This created a great deal of interest and exhibits were made in everything from father's favorite pipe to driftwood. There were 234 entries in the show.

Mrs. William Gould of Greenville was responsible for the educational exhibit which proved interesting as well as educational. During the afternoon from 4 until 5, Mrs. E. F. Gregory and Mrs. Charles Lea held an open forum in the lobby at which time visitors could bring their violet problems or anything of educational value to be passed on to the others. This proved to be a wonderful success.

Section of Spartanburg display.





George Yehnert shows her miniature garden display.

AKRON SHOW

The African Violet Society of Greater Akron, Ohio held its first non-competitive violet exhibit in the Auditorium of the O'Neil Company store. Long tables were placed along the walls and two and three tiered various shaped blocks were placed on the tables at intervals to add height and interest to the display. 265 plants representing one hundred fifty varieties were on exhibit. Mrs. Joseph Hodan of Cleveland and Mrs. Cameron Conant of Bay Village, Ohio, acted as critics and gave the club members many valuable pointers on how to improve plants for bigger and better shows.

Fifteen hundred registrations were made in the record book of attendance, but the estimated attendance was about 4,000. Publicity through the Akron Beacon Journal, the Barberton Herald, and the Cleveland Plain Dealer helped to make this show an outstanding success.

Committee for the show were:

Mrs. Helen Pochurck, Chairman.
Mrs. Harold Dannemiller, Co-chairman.
Mrs. John J. Martin.
Mrs. Roy Gracy.

VIOLETS

God made our lovely violets
They grew wild, you know,
In a far off country,
Where there is no ice and snow —
But one day, some one found them,
Brought them back across the sea —
Watered, cared for and petted them
All — for you and me.

Clara Atwood



From left to right, Mrs. Thoburn, Mrs. Ketcham, Arrison.

TRENTON, N. J. SHOW

On Saturday, April 29th, the African Violet Club of New Jersey held its first annual show in Trenton. It was non-competitive and over 100 saintpaulias comprising 70 varieties were exhibited.

The plants were displayed on tables. Some were combined in attractive arrangements in sewing baskets, vases, trays, and containers.

Members were on hand to talk violets to any and all who came to the exhibit. Much interest was shown by the visitors and pamphlets were given out. These contained instructions on growing, care and the history of saintpaulias.

Mrs. Malcolm Thoburn spoke on the radio before the show, giving advice on successfully growing African violets and extending an invitation to the public to attend.

ODE TO AN AFRICAN VIOLET

Your beauty is a poem rare
That only soul-tuned hearts may read;
Your modesty, the gracious crown
That is your own, your rightful meed.

Far from your ancient habitat,
Unruffled by new things that be
You live and bloom — thus teaching us
A calm, serene philosophy.

Bertie H. Clinkscales

NEMATODES and PARATHION

Neil C. and Mary J. Miller, N. J.

CONTINUED FROM JUNE

II

Now for a description of my encounter with nematodes and a glimpse of what it may mean for the future.

I don't know how or where my plants acquired nematodes (as will be the case with most hobbyists who find their plants have them). I had been sterilizing soil for some time, using formaldehyde. Maybe it failed, as it has in other instances. Maybe certain plants I bought were infested and the nematodes spread, although I had always been careful about not re-using soil, disinfecting pots, etc. More likely the nematodes came in through an experiment I tried.

I had noticed, as many others have also, that plants allowed to remain in tiny pots (2-inch or less) frequently came into bloom long before the plants of the same age potted into larger pots. On the other hand, the plants in the larger pots were practically always nicer plants when they reached the free-blooming stage at 9-12 months. I reasoned that it might be possible to combine both effects by dual-potting: placing the plantlet in a container that would restrain the roots for a while but through which they would eventually break, and setting this inner container in a larger pot. I thought the inner container might hold the roots back enough to throw the plants into early bloom but that the roots would finally go on through the temporary pot, fill the larger pot, and produce a larger plant.

I noticed an advertisement for manure composition pots; I bought some of 2-inch size. I potted a number of plants in them and re-set them immediately in 3-inch pots.

And immediately troubles began!

(Again I should state that I can not be sure the troubles came from the manure composition pots. If they are manufactured as claimed they should have been treated at temperatures high enough to kill any vermin within them. Maybe it was all coincidence, but the suspicion lingers.)

The first thing to appear was black flies. Prior to that time my collection had been practically free of them, but now they appeared in clouds. I had read that DDT would control them, so I painted several pots with a 10% solution. If it did any good, it was negligible. But black flies are a common saintpaulia annoyance, few collections remaining permanently free of them, so I didn't worry too much about them.

Then came a large increase in the number of wiggle-tails. I had always had some of these around (as who hasn't?), so, while

I didn't like the increase, it didn't spur me to drastic action.

Then a number of reddish-brown creatures began to appear on the outsides of the pots. Washing under a spigot would remove them, but more would always appear.

I tried covering the soil in pots with tobacco dust. It did no good. Then I tried mixing tobacco dust with the soil. It also did no good. Then I tried nicotine sulphate (Black Leaf 40) at various strengths, even up to 40% as it came from the bottle, also with negligible control of anything.

Then came "crown-rot." Not much, but enough to be disturbing.

(It will be remembered that in my article "Mite, Water Bath, and Selenate," I mentioned this crown rot as an indication that use of sodium selenate for cyclamen mite damaged plant crowns. I have seen nothing since then myself, nor have I uncovered anything in a rather wide correspondence on the subject, to indicate further that selenate has any harmful effect on plant crowns. I now regard that observation as a good example of the confused recognition and reporting that has characterized nematode damage to saintpaulias to date.)

Then came root-rot. A plant would appear perfectly healthy one day, then suddenly become wilted the next. No amount of watering would help. Then I would find that the wilted plant was loose in the pot and could generally be lifted out, all connection between stem and roots having been broken.

I examined other plants and found a number that were becoming "wobbly" in the pots. Examination at ground level always showed the stem to be badly damaged. Thus I came to recognize "wobbling" as an indication that the plant would soon wilt and come out of the pot.

In the investigation I always found multi-legged, milk-white nervously-moving creatures about 1/8-inch long at the soil surface.

I washed the soil from the roots of several plants and found a large number of wriggling things, some were wiggle tails, some were centipedes, some were fly larvae, possibly there were others.

I removed several plants from the pots and broke down the manure pots within them. The manure pots always had quantities of larve in them, frequently being honeycombed with trails and tunnels.

I examined a plant quite carefully where it was "rotted-off" and in the stem just above. The "rotted" area ended in a dry, powdery, brown mass. ("Brown rot of

roots," as others have called it.) I sliced the stem into thin slices with a razor blade and examined them under the hand lens. The lowest remaining stem tip above the cut-off sometimes was a normal green color, sometimes it was brownish in color. In the brown area I could see tiny pearly white dots, not quite round, with a slight protrusion on one side. The same condition as at the cut-off point frequently ran up the stem for $\frac{1}{4}$ " or more, but always the outer layer was gone, the "bark" had been stripped off. Above the point where the outer layer was again present there was always a distinct separation between the outer layers and the central cylinder. There was a damaged, brown, moist area, running in a circle all the way around the stem. In this area I always found the centipedes, generally the reddish-mites, white worms about $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch long, and the pearly white dots I sometimes found lower down.

It was time to start fighting again.

I took a couple of plants over to the University of Delaware where Dr. Donald MacCreary examined them. He found the "pearly white dots" I had seen, and diagnosed them as root-knot nematodes. He took several specimens and sent them to Beltsville for confirmation identification. Then he advised me to contact Dr. C. C. Hamilton at the New Jersey State Agricultural Experiment Station for advice on how to handle the other insects.

I took some plants to Dr. Hamilton. He said the black flies were fungus gnats, insects that feed on the fungi present on decaying material, probably harmless to saintpaulias no matter how annoying they might be. The reddish-colored mites were of "the bulb mite type" and the nervous

milky-white creatures were garden centipedes. Both the mites and the centipedes are capable of primary plant damage and can cause serious secondary damage when they enter plant wounds caused by other organisms such as nematodes.

He had done some work with parathion and thought it was worth a trial. He could make no predictions concerning its effect on nematodes but thought it would kill the others. Parathion has since been termed

continued on page 35

Fig. 4. These young plants, propagated from leaves by a grower in the mid-West, apparently became infected with root-knot nematodes while still in the propagating beds. Here again the root system has been almost entirely destroyed.

These damaged root areas and stem-stumps correspond roughly to skin lesions, such as cuts or broken blisters, in human bings. Microbes and bacteria, always present in the atmosphere but unable to enter the body because of the protective action of human skin, do enter through lesions and cause infections that can become painful or serious unless checked. In the case of plants, the invaders are bacteria, fungi, or other insects. Many of these are totally unable to penetrate the outer layers of plant tissue by anything they can do of their own accord, so are entirely harmless until nematodes make wounds through which they can enter. It is these secondary infections that generally result in greatest damage to plants; the nematodes themselves seldom kill the plants without assistance.



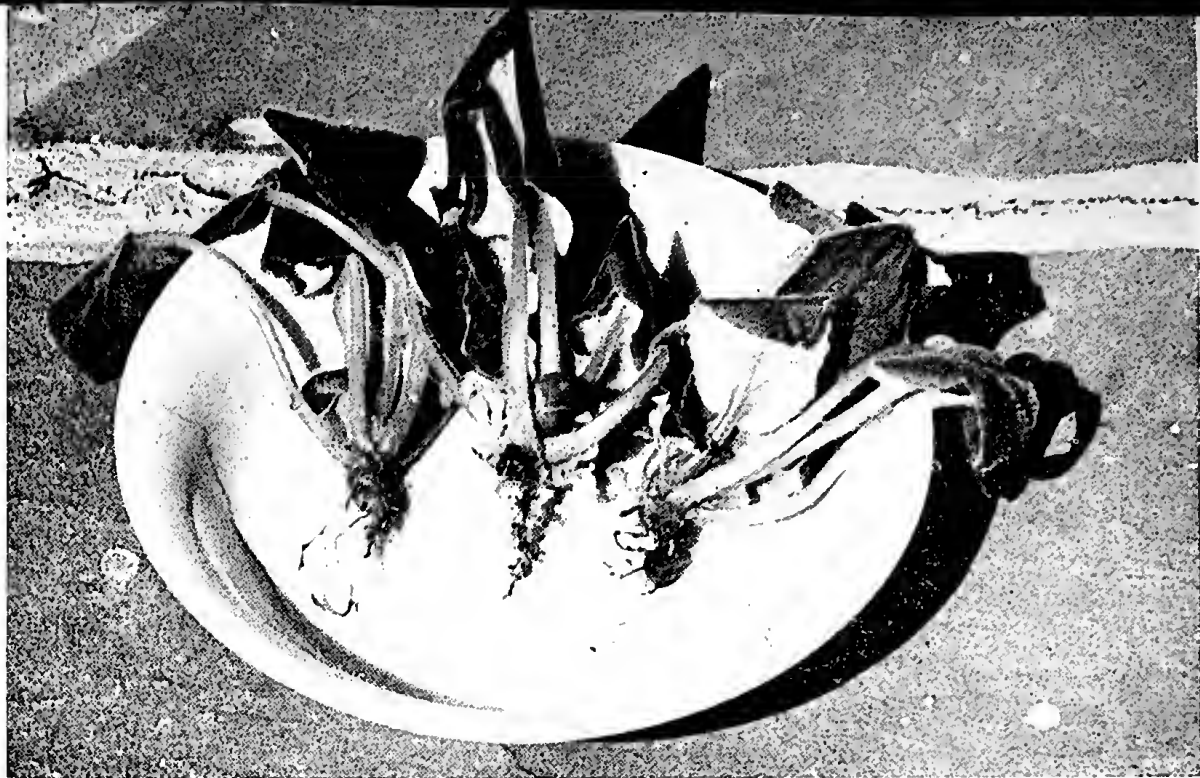


Fig. 5. These plants, like those in Fig. 4, apparently became infected during propagation. Destruction of roots, such as shown by these plants, is fairly typical of damage resulting from root-knot nematode infestation. The plant in the center shows advanced damage extending up to the lower leaves, leaves so under-mined frequently drop onto the pot edge and become "pot-edge droopers."

Note that Figs. 3, 4, and 5, while they show roots seriously damaged by nematodes, and in which root-knot nematodes were actually found, do not show a single example of a definitely recognizable root-knot. This absence of definite knot formation in saintpaulia has often caused infestations to escape detection.

"the wonder insecticide," but at that time (December, 1948) it had had only experimental testing. He cautioned that, since its poisonous effects on human beings had been very inadequately tested, I should be very careful in using it. And, so far as he was aware, it had never been used on African violets, so might kill them immediately. He also advised delay in releasing any favorable results obtained because of the possible danger in use of parathion by persons not particularly instructed in its use.

I secured some parathion (25% wettable powder) and made up a tolerance series at the rates of 32, 16, 8, 4, 2, 1 pounds of the powder per 100 gallons of water. I dipped one plant in each solution and set them aside to drain and dry, fully expecting to see most of them die.

After four days not one of the test plants showed any reaction whatever.

I made up three gallons of the 4 lbs.-per-100-gal. concentration solution and started dipping. I got a rare break in the weather, the first week of January (1949) was practically summer temperature here in New Jersey, so I was able to work outdoors.

I grasped the pots with pliers, immersed the plants to above the crown level, held them there for ten seconds, removed them, and set them on trays to drain, allowing any solution lying on top of the soil to soak down through it. I ran the plants through in two batches, about four days apart, treating about seven hundred in all.

There was no plant reaction, either immediate or delayed, that I was able to observe. A few leaves and blossoms were knocked off in the dipping process. The solution dried to powdery spots on some leaves and had to be washed off. But there was no wilting of leaves or loss of blooms, nor any other undesirable effect.

I watched several pots quite carefully to see what happened to the mites. Up to twenty-four hours after dipping a few sick mites could be seen, then suddenly they were gone and only a shapeless skeleton of each was left.

(The "bulb-type mites" mentioned in this article should not be confused with cyclamen or broad mites. Cyclamen and broad mites are too small to be seen with the naked eye. They feed only on young shoots in the growing crown of the plants, they cause severe damage. The bulb mites are fat little fellows, pinkish to reddish in color, about 1/16th inch long, easily visible to the naked eye. They are frequently seen on the outside of the pots, but they also feed on other plant parts, particularly the stems when nematode damage is also present.)



Fig. 6. The picture of this tiny plant (here enlarged to more than actual size) is included only to illustrate the fact that when plants are sent to experiment stations for diagnosis they should be wrapped as carefully as they would be if they were a valued new variety being sent to a friend. This plant was raised in Tennessee, and was sent to New Jersey for examination. It was packed in unmoistened cotton and was thoroughly dried out on arrival. The damage appears quite typical of nematodes, but no nematodes could be found in it. It was thus impossible to tell whether there really were any nematodes present (or, conversely, whether it was a case of straight root-rot), or whether the nematodes had escaped into the packing material or had died in the drying out process. Plants sent to experiment stations must be properly prepared for shipment.

That was the end of the bulb mites; I haven't seen one since.

There were a few flies for a day or two, then they all vanished. For several months I didn't see one. During the late summer and fall I saw a few around the house, as will generally be the case when fruit is present, but they showed no tendency to inhabit the violets.

The centipedes disappeared as completely as the mites.

I have seen wiggle-tails since then only in pots holding incoming plants before I could get them dipped.

I took at least one plant daily for ten days or more after dipping and sliced the stem into thin cross-section slices. After

the second day the "pearly white dots" began to turn gray and shrivel. After ten days I couldn't find any. This appeared to be death of the nematodes also.

A few more plants collapsed in the week after dipping. Examination showed that all of them had probably been eaten off prior to dipping but had not yet dried enough to wilt.

That was the end of the plant damage. The wobbly plants began to tighten up in the pots. I took a few out of the pots and found new roots developing in the damaged areas.

In the next few weeks I repotted nearly two hundred plants. Most of them had scarred areas at the soil surface, many had been badly attacked. But I didn't see a living creature of any kind. The tunnels in the manure pots were still there, but there was nothing alive in them.

The report on the specimens taken by Dr. MacCreary came in promptly from Beltsville. The "pearly white dots" were root-knot nematode females. The worms about $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch long were oligochetes, harmless scavengers which clean up dead tissue resulting from the attack of other organisms.

I have lost only two adult plants and about a half dozen smaller plants since then from nematode-originated damage. (Most of them appear in the illustrations.) One adult was a big old plant that probably was not completely immersed in the original dipping. The smaller plants appear to have been potted out from one propagating jar, they probably escaped the original dipping.

Another observer has found that a few ounces of the parathion solution worked into the soil in nematode-infested propagating jars has eliminated petiole-rotting and has not interfered with root formation.

At that time I had no idea how serious nematodes were as general crop pests. (Dr. Steiner's booklet, from which I drew much of the basic information in the first half of this article, had not yet been issued.) Nor did I know that no satisfactory chemical means of killing nematodes in living plant tissue had ever been devised. So I didn't realize that the shriveling and disappearance of the root-knot nematode females which I was apparently witnessing and which I interpret as death of the nematodes, was, if it could be verified, a preview of a pest control method that might attain economic importance.

But discussion of my results with competent nematologists leads to considerable doubt that the treatment was so thoroughly successful as it seemed. I got complete relief from the difficulties (and that is all most African violet growers would desire), but whether it was by direct control of the nematodes or only by elimination of concurrent infections can not now be told for certain.

In the first place, no complete and accurate identification of the creatures infesting my plants was made. Only the root-knot nematodes and the oligocheates were definitely determined. There may have been, and probably were, other nematode species present. And the fungus gnats, "bulb-mites," centipedes, and spring-tails were not identified as to genus and species. Thus, with incomplete knowledge of the infestation, appraisal of the method of cure is difficult.

The particularly weak point in evaluating the effect is that the extent of the nematode infestation itself was not determined. It may be that the thirty some plants in which I actually saw nematodes may have been the entire extent of the nematode infestation, and the scarred areas I saw on so many plants during re-potting may have been produced entirely by the action of other vermin, either singly or in combination. If that were the case the parathion could have produced the results it did merely by killing the other infestants, without touching the nematodes at all.

There can also be question that I witnessed progressive disappearance of nematodes. I couldn't follow any particular nematode to observe what happened to it. I sectioned different plants from day to day. It is possible that by some unexplainable circumstance I happened to select plants that were in progression more and more free of nematodes.

Conceivably also, the disappearance I noted could have been only an abortion process. The females are visible only when egg-bloated, so if they were forced to a pre-mature egg discharge they might remain alive and unseen.



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Even if adult females were killed there is the possibility that larvae or eggs might survive and lead to later re-infestation. If such does occur it must be slow, as I have had no nematode-caused loss (with the exceptions noted) for many months now. Relief so extensive as that would be welcomed for most any pest on most any crop.

Also, I don't know what the average dosage was. I made up all solutions to the same strength (4 pounds of the 25% powder per hundred gallons of water) but I didn't keep accurate record either of the total volume of solution used or the total number of plants dipped. From what I can recall the average disappearance was between 0.2 and 0.3 grams per pot. This is a very heavy dosage and may render the treatment impracticable, from a cost angle for acreage crops and from a residual fume angle for greenhouse crops.

There also seems to be no ready answer to the question "How did the parathion reach the nematodes buried deep in plant tissue?" Was it by direct liquid penetration? Was it by absorption by the roots and translocation through the sap stream? Was it by fumigation? There are reasons to doubt that any of these would be effective.

But when all due allowances are made for incomplete knowledge of infestations and mechanism of cure, it seems that a conclusion that parathion was without effect on the nematodes themselves involves stretching fortuity and coincidence a little too far.

III

Systematic appraisal of parathion as a nematode control must await verification work by industrial research and agricultural experiment stations. Some is known to be under way, and no doubt there is much more under way which has not yet reached the progress-report stage. What little information that is available from this work to date indicates that parathion will kill root-knot nematodes wherever it can come in contact with them, and that it has the least harmful effect to plants of any nematocide so far tested. The question of penetration is still unsettled.

Most violet growers would be glad to stop the concurrent infections and eliminate plant loss as I did, whether the nematodes were actually killed or not. When work was started on this article in May 1949, it was hoped to publish it in December as a how-to-do-it article. Checking with U. S. Department of Agriculture officials just before the September 1st deadline indicated that knowledge of parathion had not yet advanced to the point where the material could be safely put into the hands of householders. But the promise for the future did not look bad. There had been several deaths caused by parathion, but they had been during manufacture and processing, and those killed had violated some definite safety rule or had been exposed to tremendous concentrations such as no user would ever experience. No very alarming

things had been reported by small scale users so long as simple safety precautions were observed. It appeared that a few more months' experience might indicate parathion to be safe for home use.

But during the late summer and fall there occurred a series of incidents which indicated the above view to be too optimistic and which have resulted in placing parathion availability further and further in the future. One farmer was killed while spraying crops with it. A whole crew of fruit pickers was hospitalized while picking fruit from parathion sprayed trees. Several "remote-control" kills of insects were recorded. One entomologist died while working with it. In all these cases the exact method of the injury or kill has not been determined, there is just enough of the unknown in each to indicate that parathion has toxic properties beyond those presently known. So far as known poisonous effects are concerned it is not materially worse than some other well-known insecticides, including one "labeled-down" to the drug-store and dime-store trade.

At the present time (late May, 1950), no responsible person would suggest using parathion except under carefully controlled experimental conditions or where the manufacturer's directions can be followed. No manufacturer is now including any directions for home use or recommending it for that kind of usage.

I don't want to start a permanent parathion-scare. Possibly further experimental work will show that it can be safely used, in that case a parathion-phobia would prevent many people from securing benefits from its use. But in the present knowledge of parathion it is not for the householder. If parathion must kill someone else let it be someone who is paid to work with it, not a housewife treating her African violets.

Greenhouse men, being more experienced in handling dangerous materials, and able to call for advice on manufacturer's representatives and state and government extension workers, may be able to find immediate beneficial use for parathion. They will probably contribute largely to the development of knowledge concerning it in the next year or two.

I know all this adds up pretty much to: I-did-it-but-you-can't. I am sorry that this is true, but it is. Serious consideration was given to the advisability of releasing the information at all; for the average violet grower, seeing her collection being slowly decimated by root-rot, it can be only a tantalization. But it was decided to release it, as publication might lead to accelerated evaluation by research workers and might speed the day when parathion can be pronounced safe for home use. Also, since plant loss from nematode infestation appears to be largely caused by secondary attack of other organisms, any means of control of these alone would be very valuable. Perhaps entomologists will be able to appraise these data and suggest some other control method less poisonous than parathion.



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There are persistent rumors in the insecticide field that a "non-poisonous parathion" is about to be marketed. Of course, this can not be true, as parathion is a definite chemical compound, and if it were altered so as to make it less poisonous, it would not be the same compound, hence not parathion. What is probably being rumored is that some material as effective as parathion against pests but less toxic to human beings is soon to be available. It is ardently to be hoped that such is the case, because, if parathion is ultimately definitely decided to be too dangerous for home use, violet growers may have to rely on this rumored material for relief. It is not inconceivable that this new material may be available in a safe-to-use form before the true facts of parathion are all worked out.

(All previous references to parathion in this article have been to it in the wettable powder form. During last summer gaseous parathion got a rather thorough trial as an aerosol. It has been found to be an excellent insecticide against many pests, including cyclamen mite. As it is a gas, it penetrates all portions of the foliage and produces kills where dusts or sprays would not. Many greenhouses are now regularly treated with it. There would appear to be practically no possibility of parathion-aerosol being of any effect against nematodes, because of concentration limitations. It should be noted that parathion-aerosol, while effective as an immediate action miticide, provides no residual protection to the plant as selenate does. Thus a plant that had been parathion-aerosol treated just before purchase from a greenhouse could become infested immediately afterwards if it were placed near a plant that had mites. A selenate treated plant would be immune for several months.)

The battle between saintpaulia growers and nematodes is just starting. No one knows at the present time how much of a battle there is to be fought, because no one knows how wide the infestation is. Even if only a small percentage of the root-rots, crown-rots, small blossoms, pot-edge droop, etc., currently reported are actually due to nematodes the infestation must be rather general, and the battle correspondingly large. But if the possibly-nematode-caused ills turn out to be otherwise caused the nematode battle will be quite small.

The first step in the battle must be one of observation and information accumulation. The real crown-rots must be sorted out from those that are nematode caused. The real root-rots must be separated from those that originate in nematodes. Likewise with the other ailments. The experiment stations will have to be depended on for the final answers. One ailing plant placed in the hands of a nematologist, a plant pathologist, or an entomologist will provide more information than a whole collection furtively dropped one-by-one into a trash can.

There must be clear recognition of the fact that nematodes can become (and may already be) so serious that they can interfere greatly with spread or continuance of African violet growing as a hobby.

There must also be a change of attitude toward all saintpaulia troubles. The culture of any plant is not in a satisfactory condition if knowledge of disease and insect control does not keep step with the growth and propagation phases. Concealment of plant ills results in retarded recognition of disease and insect infestation and thus holds back development of a most important sector of saintpaulia science. Actually, in the present knowledge of the extent of nematode infestation, a person who has nematodes is no more to be censured than the mother whose child comes home from school with the measles.

The nematode situation today is in much the same unsatisfactory condition as the mite situation in mid-1947 when, no matter what authority I consulted, I could get only two answers: prevention and discard. Prevention is fine, but too often preventive measures weren't taken soon enough by the present owner or weren't taken at all by a previous handler. And discard ("roguing" is the general term for it), while widely used as a greenhouse control for plant difficulties, simply is not satisfactory for the saintpaulia hobbyist; each plant represents a variety and its loss is keenly felt. What is needed is a cure, something that will free the plant of the pest after the infestation has been discovered. The cure for mite is available, the cure for nematodes is not. Parathion may prove to be the nematode cure, but it is not yet ready for use.

Acknowledgment. Grateful acknowledgment is given to Dr. Donald MacCreary of the Delaware State Experimental Station, and to Dr. C. C. Hamilton of the New Jersey State Experimental Station for the parts they played in the early stages. Any priority that might accrue from this report belongs to Dr. Hamilton.

Particular acknowledgment is due to Dr. C. G. Steiner, Principal Nematologist, U. S. D. A. Bureau of Plant Industry, Beltsville, Maryland, and to Dr. Floyd F. Smith, Senior Entomologist, U. S. D. A. Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine, Beltsville, Md., for their assistance in collecting the information and for reviewing the manuscript before publication. Their aid and suggestions have been very valuable.

The two booklets, "The Root-Knot Nematode," by Jocelyn Tyler, and Plant Nematodes the Grower Should Know" by Dr. Steiner, have been heavily drawn upon as references.

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AFRICAN VIOLETS with a PATENT

Ruth Dahnke, Kan.

Saintpaulia collectors are indebted to our Commercial Growers for the increasing number of new varieties being offered each year. We wonder how anything new can be developed in African violets, only to see a new introduction so very different. Perhaps this is the main reason for so much interest even to veteran collectors. Some of these varieties have been protected by Patent Rights that the originator may in a small way be repaid for his years of research and to assure that name be associated with the new variety. The patent rights are in force for seventeen years from the time the rights are issued.

Most of us know and understand a patented plant may be propagated provided you have written permission, which accompanies your purchase of patent sticks. The sticks come in lots of 100 for \$2.50. You may then propagate that plant to sell, keep or give away, but each must be accompanied by the patent stick. To comply with the law, if you sell or give a leaf of a patented variety, it must be accompanied by a patent stick. It is up to you whether you stand the cost of 2½¢ per stick or your customer or friend. The plant patent covers a specific plant with a very definite color and type of growth which includes foliage, shape, color and growth characteristics.

The first African violet patented was Pink Beauty. The patent was issued May 5, 1942 with patent No. 514. The inventor was Frank Brockner, assignor to Holton & Hunkel Company, 797 North Milwaukee St., Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Pink Beauty has very pretty clear pink flowers that are large. The leaf is medium green with very much the same habit of growth as Blue Boy.

Ulery's Blue Girl was originated and patented by Ulery's Greenhouses of 1325 Maiden Lane, Springfield, Ohio. On July 28, 1942, Ulery's Blue Girl was issued Plant Patent No. 535. The originator, Ulery's Greenhouses, holds the patent and it is from them you order the permit and patent sticks for Blue Girl. Blue Girl is a sport, or mutation of Blue Boy. The flower exactly resembles Blue Boy as to color and size of bloom. The leaf has a shorter stem than Blue Boy; it is perfectly heart shaped with a serrated edge which becomes more pronounced as the plant increases with age. The most

attractive feature is that each leaf has an ivory colored spot or marking at the base of each leaf and ivory veining running out from this spot into the leaf. The leaf stem is sturdy, holding the leaf above the pot. The foliage is lighter green than Blue Boy and because of the ivory variegation, it will take more sunlight and does not need as much shading. It is a very good bloomer.

The next patented African violet was White Lady; patent No. 597 was issued August 3, 1943. Silver Terrace Nursery of San Francisco, California, applied for the patent; however the holder of the patent rights is Fred C. Gloeckner & Co., Inc., 15 East 26th St. at Madison Square, New York 10, New York, and it is from them you obtain patent sticks. White Lady has a pure white flower, the leaf is light green, almost white underneath but the shape is the same as Blue Boy. The parent plant is Blue Boy.

Four years later, Mr. R. G. Baxter of Youngstown, Ohio received patents on two lovely African violets, Pink Girl and Gorgeous. Pink Girl is a sport of Pink Beauty and has no "Blue Girl blood" at all. The leaf is irregularly scalloped with an ivory spot at the base of the leaf. It is a very good bloomer with large bright pink flowers. Patent No. 769 was issued Dec. 16, 1947, and only recently have propagation rights been allowed, but now you may obtain patent sticks from Mr. R. G. Baxter, Box 1444, Youngstown, Ohio.

On that same date, Mr. Baxter received the patent rights on another of his introductions, Gorgeous. This plant was not a sport but a seedling of a cross of Blue Boy and Bi-Color. This flower is not as marked a contrast as in Bi-Color but has a lovely wine colored flower, the two top petals a few shades darker than the three lower ones. The leaf is very waxy, pointed and spooned. It holds patent No. 770 and patent sticks may be purchased from Mr. R. G. Baxter, Box 1444, Youngstown, Ohio.

The latest plant to be patented in our African violet group is Lady Geneva by Geneva and Sunnysdale Nursery of San Francisco, Calif. Again we were introduced to something entirely new. Lady Geneva has a purple flower completely edged with a band of glistening white. The leaf is medium green and slightly

quilted. This new variety is now known to most of us who are collectors, but is new enough to attract the attention of other flower lovers who are not collectors of African violets. The permit and patent sticks may be obtained from Geneva and Sunnydale Nurserys Inc., 250 Schwerin Street, San Francisco, Calif.

Perhaps you have space for only a few plants and you do not care to propagate the patented varieties. Other plants are now advertised that will give you a color range but not exactly the same combination of flower and foliage. Pink Star and Pink Leatherneck with Dainty Maid and the pale pink of Blushing Maiden will add pink to your collection. White Sister, White Waterlily, White Queen, White King, Snow Queen, Brown's White seedling and White Girl are now advertised. The Ulery's Blue Girl type of foliage is very popular with other colors in flower; including Red Headed Girl, Light Blue Girl, The My Lady Series, Sailor Girl, Mulberry Girl, Bronze Girl with very deep green foliage, and several of the Gypsy group. Gypsy Rubra is similar to Gorgeous but with good light the leaf is so red underneath it gives the leaf an almost brown cast.

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BLUE HYDRANGEA,
Mrs. C. L. Hixson,
Atchison, Kansas.

HALO,
Mrs. C. L. Hixson,
Atchison, Kansas.

DREAM BOAT,
Mrs. Luther H. Rose,
Kansas City, Missouri.

NAUGHTY MARIETTA,
Mrs. A. C. Hasenyager and
Mrs. Fay Gillette,
Tecumseh, Nebr.

PACIFIC PRINCE,
Mrs. Carolyn K. Rector,
San Pedro, Calif.

MARDI'S BI-COLOR,
Mrs. Milton Eckhardt,
Baltimore, Md.

FLORIDA LADY,
Mrs. Ruby Gains,
Gainesville, Fla.

FERN LEAF BLUE,
Mrs. Sophie Gordon,
Vinton, Iowa.

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Fayette, Ohio

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James and Annabell Noker



Lauretta L. Littig, 3016 Jefferson Ave. Davenport, Iowa

First, I want to thank those who took the time and trouble to send me their answers to the questions asked in the last issue.

I will try to answer each question personally as I receive them. I will also appreciate your writing me if you can answer any of the questions asked by the other readers. Your answers will be published and should be helpful to those who may have had similar problems.

How often should insecticide be used, and what is best to use at regular intervals as a preventive measure?

Mrs. John E. Jones, Ind.

Some of my flower stems have turned a greyish color, and look as though they had little specks of mold but do not brush off. This does not affect the blossoms. What causes it?

Mrs. Ruth W. Brown, Ind.

Could you tell me where I may obtain plant patent labels for Lady Geneva?

Mrs. Katherine Rhodes, O.

My White Lady is small and blooming well for its size, but some blossoms have 3-4-5 and 6 petals. The leaves are two shades of green, like water had been splashed on them. What causes this?

Richard White, Mass.

I bought a white violet a year ago which had four blossoms. It has not bloomed since, and the leaves are not a healthy green color. Can you tell me what is wrong?

Also please tell me do African violets do well if planted in dishes without drainage such as a teapot, low vases and so forth?

Mrs. Otto Janck, Minn.

I have several violets that look fine and bloom all the time, but just as soon as I water them, the blooms fall off. If I leave them dry, the blooms will not fall. I have tried four different soil mixtures! Do you know what causes this?

Mrs. C. DeGreave, Mo.

When one of my Double Duchess bloomed it was lighter than the others, and on one of the buds, instead of opening a plant has grown from it. This has eight leaves and buds are forming. Is this unusual, a freak or a sport?

Mrs. Roy Spring, O.

What is wrong with my Pink Beauty? The stems start getting brown and stiff spreading into the leaf. It starts like a brown scale on the stem. It does not spread to the other plants. It takes quite a while for the plant to die, as two of my friends lost their Pink Beautys the same way.

Mrs. John Phillips, Iowa.

I have tiny flies which seem to come up out of the soil and fly around my violet plants. There are drops of water which seems to ooze from the edge of the leaves although my plants are quite healthy. Could these flies be the cause? I do not sterilize my soil.

Rosamond V. Earnest, Tenn.

Does Lady Geneva come true each time from leaf propagation? I have heard that it does not.

Mrs. Freda Binne, O.

I have a Lady Elizabeth leaf rooting in vermiculite. It has new growth, one on the edge of the leaf at the top of the petiole, another coming from the end of the petiole. How do I handle these babies, and which do I pot?

Mrs. Edith B. Swagner, Pa.

Why should a healthy plant all of a sudden soften its leaves? This softening starts at the edge of the leaf and finally the whole leaf is soft.

Mrs. Mabel Weaver, Pa.

ANSWERS

Separating Siamese Plants

To Miss Adelaide Beck, Tenn.

When separating plants of a siamese nature, I dust the raw places with Rootone and set each such treated plant in a pot containing porous leaf mold and a little sand, putting a small piece of charcoal in the bottom over broken pieces of pot. Plants are set in a pan of warm Vitamin B-1 water until sufficient water is taken up. They are then transferred to a tray of sand and watered as needed with warm Hyponex water. I also find this method excellent for rooting "suckers."

Joseph D. Shulz, Mo.

In separating plants of a siamese nature, I cut them apart and put "mike sulphur" on the raw places of the mother plant and

also on the one I cut from it. I put this plant in regular violet soil in a pot, and keep water under it until it takes root. I have never lost a plant by this method.

Mrs. Bessie Merrill, Va.

Beautiful Foliage—No Blooms

To Mrs. G. A. Childs, W. Va.

Beautiful foliage and no blooms is an indication of insufficient sunlight. Move your plants to where it is a little lighter, but avoid direct sunlight for any appreciable length of time as it is easy to get too much sun.

H. G. Harvey, Ga.

I had the same trouble as Mrs. Childs, nice foliage and no blooms. Soon after I put them in a south window, they were full of blooms.

Mrs. Bessie Merrill, Va.

Persian Violet

To Mrs. Peter Sale, Ill.

The violet Mrs. Sale describes as a Persian violet is exactly like the one I bought for a Dickson's Purple.

Mrs. Bessie Merrill, Va.

Amazons and Supremes

To Mrs. Glen Spangenburg, Mich.

Amazons and Supremes are developments of the same mutation tendency. This does not mean they are identical since different sports of the same variety can very possibly exhibit somewhat different characteristics even though they are both following out the same general tendency.

H. G. Harvey, Ga.

Blue Chard

To Richard D. White, Mass.

In response to your inquiry, I bought my Blue Chard plant from Granger Gardens, Route No. 1, Wadsworth, Ohio.

Mrs. George W. Walk, Mo.

Small Blossoms

To Miss E. Carlson, Ill.

I suggest you try a little fertilizer to increase the size of your flowers. Water your plants from the top using $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon Hyponex to a quart of water, about once every two weeks. Six weeks of this regime should show results. Young plants show smaller flowers, also small pots have a tendency to have small flowers and a lot of them. Some varieties just naturally have small flowers.

H. G. Harvey, Ga.

Bud Blight

To Mrs. F. D. Bailey, Mass.

The standard answer to why buds dry up and do not open is that the humidity is too low. This is probably the correct answer if this occurred during the winter when the furnace was on. The cure, of course is to increase the humidity. Another cause is the plants get too dry by not being watered enough. Flower buds are the first part of the plant to suffer from too dry soil. Another cause could be the plants are subjected to short intervals of direct sunlight—too much for the buds but not enough to effect the foliage.

H. G. Harvey, Ga.



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D-Vista Gardens, Salem, Oregon, says: "Results have been excellent. The violets took on fine color and the blooms have been large."

Send \$1.00 for trial pint, postage prepaid.



ATLAS FERTILIZER EMULSION
Room 807 - No. 1 Drumm St.
San Francisco, California

LIGHT and the AFRICAN VIOLET

Marvel E. Spangenberg, Mich.

Among the factors of growing African violets, I have just realized that none can be any more interesting or important than light. We read or hear that north or east windows are considered best. In the following I should like to relate my own experience and pass along the facts I have learned.

When I first started to grow and collect my vast number of varieties we lived in a home that gave only south and west windows for violet space. My larger blooming plants were in the south and did very well. They grew tall, quite upright, and bloomed profusely. Of course, a part of the day I had to lower the shade because so much sun would fade the foliage. I was always pleased with my success with blooms and always happy to hear the compliments given me by my friends.

My small plants and leaves growing babies were in west windows and got the sun only as it was going down in late afternoon. These plants grew nicely, had red markings on the leaves and were thrifty young plants. I often wondered why north and east windows were considered best for here I was using south and west. Could there be any nicer violets than mine? I didn't think so; at least I was content.

The day came when we had a buyer for our home. That meant we could have a new home - perhaps one with a room just for my violets. How quickly things began to happen! We found a new house, not even finished, and the brightest, lightest house I ever saw. I could visualize my violets growing in every room because the light came from every direction. The living room had a large picture window in the north and a single window with western exposure. The front door even had a long glass in it. Adjacent to the living room was space where my violet room could be built; it would have triple windows in the north, single windows in the west and south.

Came fall and we were in our new home but far from settled. Violets were in every room, in front of any window, just to have a place until the violet room could be completed. The picture window was filled as were the kitchen windows;

two windows in a bedroom were also filled. The days flew by with so many tasks at hand that the violets had practically no care except to be watered and occasionally fed, and sometimes they were fortunate to even get that much attention. Winter was approaching, and as many other tasks about the new home had to be taken care of before cold weather set in, the completion of the violet room had to be temporarily postponed. My violets still sat in their make-shift places but something was wrong (probably they were as mixed up as we were). I realized that they were shocked in the process of moving. The water was different, their light came from just the opposite directions than they had been accustomed to. Not knowing what to do, I just let them alone. There were very few buds or flowers.

As the holiday season approached we had one large shelf completed around the violet room which we quickly filled with plants. A living room table was covered with plants; the leaves growing babies and other small plants were still in the bedroom; the kitchen windows were filled with two-inch potted plants. Things settled down for the long winter. We could do no more on the house so decided to see what winter life would be like in our new home.

As the weeks went by many buds began to appear on the large plants and they had changed in their manner of growing. They were flat, with outside leaves growing over the pot. The leaves were darker in color, some very red on the back. There was little sun, and I wished for more of it. The small plants in the kitchen windows had grown so much they even cupped over the edge of the pots. The backs of the leaves were so red it fairly took one's breath away. Small as the plants were, buds were already forming, and I knew that I would soon have loads of flowers in my kitchen where I spend so much of my time and where it is a joy to have such beauty. I could almost see these plants grow from day to day. Maybe they liked the steam from cooking; at any rate, they became my pride and joy.


By the time March arrived the days were longer and there was more light and sun. What dividends the spring paid me! Each plant fairly burst forth with blossoms, not only in the kitchen but in every room. Here I was in my new home and my dream of last fall a reality - I had African violets blooming all over the house. Now my hopes soar for the completion of my violet room so I may arrange my violets in their permanent home where they can show off their beauty in full glory.

My conclusion is that our precious violets will grow in ANY exposure with light, love and care. It is true that different exposures produce a difference in growth, which is the reason some varieties do not look familiar at times. It is often true that it is difficult to identify plants which are grown in different exposures. I do think the growing babies need some sun, just as all babies do, to make them grow fast, while mature plants can thrive and bloom in good light alone.

THIS 'N THAT

Our little flat was full of flowers,
Some were big and some were small,
My wife nursed the things for hours,
Until I told her, "That is all!!"
Let's give them all away to neighbors,
For I have seen them bloom enough,
We've other uses for our labors,
And there's no room for all this stuff."
She shed a tear and parted
With all her potted rigamarole,
But then — the trouble really started,
With one small violet, Bless my soul!
She brought it home and said, "It's little,
You see it will not take up space,
It's African, it's leaves are brittle,
So do not touch it any place."
It was a pretty sort of critter,
With flowers of purple hue,
And I became a "violet sitter"
And watched the darn thing as it grew.
But then my wifey propagated,
We had violets by the score!
And even when she went to town,
She came home with more!
They filled every nook and corner,
And even cluttered up the hall,
I felt like little Jackie Horner
Except I had no place at all.
The window sills had pots upon 'em;
The kitchen table held a score;
The pantry shelves held violets.
(We kept the canned goods on the floor)
The wife and I are acrobatic;
We leap o'er violet pots like cats,
But strange to say — we're both ecstatic,
About the little "this 'n that!"

Karl Flaster



**WE'VE BEEN MAKING
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That's right. Down on the banks of bayous in South Louisiana, for over half a century, billions of earth worms have lived a rich life in the piled-up by-products of the Spanish Moss ginning operations. The castings from these worms are fortified by fish and animal excrement, various mineral substances and micro-organisms. So, these deposits have been made into a superlatively rich plant food. They are now being recovered, dehydrated, refined, and packed into bags for your use under the name Gro-Mulch.

Gro-Mulch is a dry, sterile, granular material that contains no added chemicals. It is a rich, pure organic soil conditioner that activates the soil in which plants are growing. Odorless and easy to use, Gro-Mulch is a mellow material that positively will not burn and will release plant food for several years. It feeds gently and holds moisture at the roots of a plant and helps it to withstand drought. It improves soil tilth since a mixture of Gro-Mulch and soil will not pack as straight soil will.

Gro-Mulch has been creating a sensation among horticulturists in South Louisiana, and Texas since distribution began about a year ago. At the Ponchatula, Louisiana flower show this year, both the Rose and the African violet that took first prize had been grown in a Gro-Mulch mixture. All types of plant life thrive astoundingly in Gro-Mulch. We have testimonials ranging from "Ivy that grew 21 inches in 21 days" to "freshly set out 2-year old rose bushes that were covered with buds in 5 weeks".

African violets that are transplanted into a mixture of one part Gro-Mulch and two parts soil, will mature faster, have finer foliage and give a profusion of rich, colorful blooms. Soil, organic matter and earthworm castings are the ingredients nature uses to grow plants and we feel sure that you will be pleased with the results you obtain.

10 Pound Bag (Postpaid) \$2.25

Western States (Postpaid) \$2.75

80 Pound Bag - - Freight Collect - - \$7.00.

SPECIAL: We also have a limited supply of fine Louisiana Iris, *giganticaerulea*, that are shipped freshly dug from Louisiana at the attractive price of \$3.50 per dozen, postpaid. This is one of the most talked about of the Iris species and which will produce those lovely purple flowers in the spring. Now is the best season for planting, so order yours today.

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Club NEWS

Maxine Wangberg, Club Editor
1920 W. 3rd. St.
Perry, Iowa.

COLUMBUS SOCIETY

The Columbus, Ohio African Violet Society met March 15, 1950 for election of officers, Mrs. Arthur Radtke presiding over ceremonies. Elected to office were:

President,	Mrs. Carlos Evans.
Vice-Pres.,	Mrs. Lee Howard.
Secretary,	Mrs. E. B. Caldwell.
Corres-Secy.,	Mrs. Albert Mann.
Treasurer,	Mrs. L. R. Kiouss.
Reporter,	Mrs. T. A. Beck.

A highlight of the occasion was Mrs. Radtke's informal lecture wherein she traced the history and development of African Violets. Colored slides of choice plants were also shown. The club is justly proud of the record made in membership. Organized a year ago with a membership of 31, it has grown to 93 members.

REPORT FROM SANTA MONICA BAY SOCIETY

The Santa Monica Bay Chapter held its first birthday party on April 4th, 1950 at the Brentwood Mart, Brentwood, California. A special birthday cake decorated with African Violets and punch was served. Thirty members were in attendance. The club has a National membership of twenty. The Chapter has an opportunity table at each meeting where newer varieties of African violet plants and leaves are sold for ways and means. Mrs. Edith Mackey, Director of Region No. 10 and President of the San Gabriel Chapter gave a short talk on grooming your plants for the forth-coming African Violet Show to be held by the Los Angeles Chapter on June 6, 1950 in Los Angeles. All Southern California chapters will participate in the show. Mrs. Marian Ruebel, of the San Gabriel Chapter was present. Election of officers for the coming term was held. The officers elected were:

President,	Mrs. Edmond Sherer.
Vice-Pres.,	Mrs. Wm. Haskell.
Sec. Treas.,	Mrs. J. R. Hall
Librarian,	Mrs. W. E. Thomason.

NEW SOCIETY AT DENVER

The African Violet Society No. 2 of Area 8, Denver, Colorado was organized in October 1949 and the following officers were elected:

President,	Mrs. L. A. Debe.
Vice-Pres.,	Mrs. George Meyers.
Secretary,	Mrs. Leslie Hill.
Treasurer,	Mrs. Gus Schmidt.

NEW SOCIETY AT WEBSTER GROVES

Under the sponsorship of the Webster Groves African Violet Society, a group of eight enthusiasts met on Dec. 6th, 1949 at the home of Mrs. J. Verby, 600 Lilac Ave., Webster Groves, Mo. and decided to start a second Chapter. Mrs. Carl Schroeder, President of the Webster Groves Society presided. The following officers were elected:

Chairman,	Mrs. W. F. Anderson.
Vice-Chairman,	Mrs. Charles Nye.
Rec. Secy.,	Mrs. O. R. Algeier.
Corres. Secy.,	Mrs. Chas. Cromwell.
Treasurer,	Mrs. J. E. Statzel.

Five meetings were scheduled for the year, to be held on the second Wednesday of January, March, May, September and November. At the January 11th meeting at the home of Mrs. Chas. Nye, seventeen members and guests were present. The history of the African violet and the African Violet Society was read by Mrs. Hart Fischer. Discussion on saintpaulias by name was led by Mrs. W. F. Anderson.

The following chairmen were appointed:

Historian,	Mrs. J. R. Counts.
Membership,	Mrs. Chas. Nye.
Program,	Mrs. A. P. Bofinger.
	Mrs. S. H. Huston.
Publicity,	Mrs. F. D. Wayman.

At the March 8 meeting at the home of Mrs. W. F. Anderson, twenty-three members were present, nineteen being National members. From the many names submitted Viking was chosen by the members as their club name. Beautiful year books made by the program chairman were presented each member. Mrs. A. P. Bofinger presented interesting information on the culture of African Violets and Mrs. W. F. Anderson demonstrated several methods of propagation. A leaf exchange followed to end the third meeting of the club.

MILWAUKEE ORGANIZES

The Milwaukee County African Violet Society was organized on June 14th with 16 members.

The following officers were elected:
President, Mrs. Theodore Rosenak.
Vice-Pres., Mrs. Frank Brodhagen.
Secy. & Treas., Mrs. George Truran.

ROCKFORD CLUB SELECTS NEW NAME

The Rockford African Violet Club is the new name selected by the African Violet

group of Rockford, Illinois. Formerly known as the Winnebago County African Violet Club the members decided to re-name their club to avoid being confused with another organization in Rockford.

CLUB FORMED IN FLORENCE, ALABAMA

A new club has been organized in Florence, Alabama which will have members from Sheffield and Tusculumbia as well.

Serving this tri-city area the new officers are:

President, Mrs. M. J. Hester.
Vice-Pres., Mrs. H. G. McCullough.
Corres. Secy., Mrs. J. T. Killian.
Rec. Secy., Mrs. C. E. Jessup.
Treasurer, Mrs. D. T. Wilcoxon.

AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF GREATER PITTSBURGH

The African Violet Society of Greater Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania was organized March 15, with a membership of 77.

Officers elected for the year are:

President, Mrs. Walter Collier
Vice-Pres., Mrs. James Affleck
2nd Vice-Pres., Mrs. Charles Horst
Rec. Secy., Mrs. Ross Harness
Treasurer, Mrs. H. A. DeLong
Corres. Secy., Mrs. C. F. Forrestall
Parliamentarian, Mrs. C. E. Hultman

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Surprise yourself and friends. Try PLANT MARVEL at our risk. See African Violets Bloom. We guarantee stronger roots — healthier foliage and bloom on all potted plants, as well as garden shrubs, roses and vines. USED and APPROVED By AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES and UNIVERSITIES.

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Don't waste money on other plant foods. PLANT MARVEL has everything — does everything for all plants growing in water, sand or soil. Send Only \$1. with this Ad for \$1.25 Can (makes 250 gals.) Try It! If not delighted after trial, return balance for full refund.

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VIOLET LOVERS ATTENTION

Why not be among the first to add the newest creation in African violets to your collection? From our observation, and from the enthusiastic expressions of some of the leading violet growers and magazine editors, who have seen them, we believe we have produced the "QUEEN" of all the African violets - "FISCHER'S FRINGETTE STRAIN".

The FRINGETTE STRAIN is a group of violets whose petals have a delightfully wavy appearance, with a decidedly fringed edge, set off by a bright yellow eye, which makes it a thing of real beauty. It is the result of a single violet crossed with our popular Double, and therefore retains many of the characteristics of the Double, among which are its longer lasting qualities. To those who like distinctive shades, FRINGETTE comes in beautiful shades of Light Blue and Dark Blue at \$1.50; Red Lavender and Blue Lavender at \$2.00; Mauvette Lavender and Pure White at \$2.50; or \$10.00 for one each of the set of six, which is a saving of \$2.00. All plants are out of 2 1/4" pots and are good, healthy plants.

The FRINGETTE STRAIN is produced by the originators of the famous FISCHER DOUBLE VIOLETS and the popular MY LADY SERIES. We ship to all parts of the country postage prepaid on orders of \$5.00, otherwise add ten cents per plant. No C.O.D. orders accepted. Send for our FREE descriptive folder and price-list which contains many other varieties, and information on how to grow African violets successfully in your own home.



1622 PACIFIC AVENUE
ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.

Fischer
Flowers

No shipments made during December, January and February.

Greenhouses,

Dept. FM

Linwood, New Jersey

Continued from page 10

New and Better Aids to Successful Violet Culture

Junius Violet Mix - A blend of fine grey sand with partially decomposed horticultural peat. Superb for seed flats, cuttings and leaf culture.

2 lb. plastic bag \$1.00 postpaid.

Chatelier's water soluble Plant Food with nutritional organics. Guaranteed analysis 8-8-20. Generous 18 ounce can makes 118 gals. complete plant food.

Per can \$1.00 postpaid.

Both for \$1.80 postpaid.

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Made from Sea Shells. Also Fish Scale Jewelry. Brooches \$1.25; Earrings & Scatter Pins \$1.00 pr; Corsages \$2.50. Send stamped envelope for list.

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Plant Magic VITAMIN B₁ Tablets

This is the same plant vitamin product so popular for so many years—that gave the amazing results in California and elsewhere you read about. Recommended especially for African violets. Handy tablets—each makes 1 to 5 gallons watering solution. Special offer: Two 100-tab. bottles for only \$1.00 postpaid.

PLANT MAGIC DIVISION

BENSON-MACLEAN, Bridgeton 67, Ind.

Fall Special On

African Violet Leaves

Nine leaves at \$5.00 postpaid.

Select five of the first group of .75 leaves, plus four of the second group of .50 leaves. Please state second choice.

BLUE EYED BEAUTY, White Girl, Fantasy, Dixie Rose, White Beauty, Mrs. Stratton, Tunia's Cleveland Indian, Tunia's Rose Butterfly.

75¢

BRONZE GIRL, Calif. Plum, Sunrise, Purple Girl, Sailor Girl No 1 and No. 2, Gypsy Freak, Gypsy Jewell, Mentor Boy Supreme, Giant Red Lavender.

50¢

Blue Eyed Beauty plants at \$2.50

Send stamp for complete new list.

Helen Pochurek

SPECIALIZING IN AFRICAN VIOLETS

14225 McCracken Road

Garfield Heights 5, Ohio

should be selected for leadership ability, and it is wise to keep changing them for good growth.

"In cross pollinating which plant should bear the seed pod in order to obtain the foliage you desire?" An answer from a lady in the audience was that in her experiments and observations the plants had appeared according to the Mendelian ratio (which you will understand better if you look it up than you would if I attempted to explain it).

"Does removing old blossoms and stems cause new little plants to come out from where the flower stem was removed?" Mrs. Layson answered, "Any shock will cause suckers, not necessarily removing flower stems or seed pods." Mr. Edens urged everyone to keep plants well groomed because they look much better with the old stems removed.

"How can you add potash to the soil and doesn't this addition make better bloom?" Potash is a potassium salt and could kill the plant if used too strongly. It would be better to use superphosphate.

A most interesting discussion followed the question, "Just how is the sale of patented varieties controlled? Cannot some arrangement be made so that these transactions can be made through a centralized committee?" To grow the patented varieties the grower must have a license and plant sticks from the person who patented the plant. It would be beyond the power of the African Violet Society to have a centralized committee for the sale of plant sticks, etc., as it wouldn't work for people who have plants patented. Mr. Edens said that it would seem advisable for a committee to be appointed to contact our lawmakers and see if we can't stop patents from being issued for African violets because it is such a variable plant that it really is not "patentable". He added, "It seems foolish to have a patent law which everyone is going to violate anyhow".

"How often should one spray with HEPT?" It should not be used in a home at all.

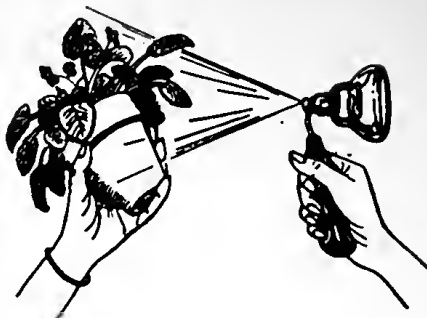
"When a violet is purchased from a greenhouse, what can be done to promote bloom after the blossoms have dropped off?" Floyd Johnson smiled and said, "Take care of it for two or three or four months . . . It will come back."

"What do you do with a plant when it becomes wobbly, and what causes this?" As we left the Convention, Neil Miller was still trying to find the person who disagreed with his answer, "Nematodes".

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Here's sure death for mealybugs, thrips, aphids, leafhoppers, plant lice, red spiders, eyelamen and African violet mites. Many of our friends have used this kit with wonderful results. Enables you to give your valuable plants the same care as professional growers give. Complete kit with easy-to-follow instructions sold only by mail — for only \$2.50 postpaid. (\$2.75 postpaid West of Chicago). Satisfaction guaranteed. Order by coupon below.



\$2.50 postpaid
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"MAGIC SOIL"

Plants Bloom "like magic" when repotted in this ideal, medium-acid, spongy soil. It's sterilized with Soilene too, for protection against thrips in soil. Over 50,000 bags have been sold coast to coast — many on repeat orders. Our large package will repot 3 to 8 plants — costs only \$1.00 postpaid. (West of Chicago \$1.25 postpaid).



WIK-FED POTS

Perfect for
African
Violets!

Fiberglass wick enables plant to draw water from reservoir in base as needed, forming ideal growing conditions. Pots in 7 different colors, all durable Styron Plastic, bases black. Add beauty to any plant setting. One pot, base and wick complete for \$1.15 postpaid. 6 complete sets only \$6.00 postpaid.

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PLANT TONIC

Keeps African Violets Blooming

Safe, convenient, easy to use. Simply stir into water you give your plants. Many users enthusiastically write us that even the most stubborn plants blossom after being fed this special Plant Tonic. Thousands of users throughout the Americas depend on Virdans Plant Tonic to keep their violets in bloom. Sturdy convenient 2 lb. container only \$1.00 postpaid. (\$1.25 West of Chicago).

*Prize Winning Plants come
from VIRDANS FARMS*

More than half the plants that won prizes at the recent Rochester (N. Y.) African Violet Show came from Virdans Farms! We offer nothing but definitely superior quality plants all out of 3" pots. We have hundreds of letters from customers who rave about the plants they received from us. We guarantee safe arrival of all plants. Write now for our new summer circular in full colors. It's free.

Clip and Mail

this coupon today!

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VIRDANS FARMS

Box 123-L

Phelps, N. Y.

To VIRDANS FARMS, Box 123-L, Phelps, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

Please ship me the following items

____ First Aid Kit _____ \$ _____
____ Plant Tonic, 2 lbs. _____ \$ _____
____ Soil, large pkg. _____ \$ _____
____ Wik-Fed Pots _____ \$ _____

Total Amount Inclosed \$ _____

Name _____

Street or R. D. _____

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TINARI'S

Popular Introductions of 1950

HELEN WILSON

- - - Our most interesting purple double flowering seedling, the first double type to have an interesting girl-type lacy leaf. This proves to be our most popular variety of the year.

2 Inch - - \$2.00 Each.

AMERICA

- - - Most beautiful of our seedlings to date. Large vigorous leaf growth, sturdy and upright. Exquisite light blue, large flat flower, slightly rippled petals.

2 Inch - - \$2.50 Each.

TINARI'S AMAZON BLUE EYES

- - - Our favorite Blue Eyes has taken on a new look. This variety is a mutant of our beautiful Blue Eyes. Large baby blue blossoms, golden yellow stamen, dark glossy leaf, deeply cupped.

2 inch - - \$1.50 Each.

Fall Specials ! ! ! !

LADY GENEVA, SAILOR GIRL, DOUBLE NEPTUNE. \$1.00 Each.

BLUE FLUTE, RED KING, ORCHID NEPTUNE, AMAZON RED, VIOLET BEAUTY, DOUBLE MENTOR BOY, GORGEOUS BICOLOR, LAVENDER GIRL HYBRID, PALE ORCHID DOUBLE. \$1.25 Each. 5 for \$6.00 P. P.

Our famous 7 for \$5.00 offer, plants 3" to 5" high, from stock of 50,000. Tinari's Blue Eyes, duPont Blue, Bi-Color, Double Light Blue, White Waterlily, Frieda, Blue Warrior, Burgundy, Double Orchid, duPont Lav. Pink, Kewensis, Norseman, Mentor Boy, Jessie, Plum Satin, Ruffles, Amazon Pink, Neptune, Amethyst, Red Land, Purple Girl, Pink Beauty.

All orders over \$5.00 postpaid, under add 50¢.

OPTOX INSECTICIDE SPRAY, 1 oz. - 60¢, 6 oz. - \$1.35.

LIQUA VITA, an excellent new liquid plant food, 8 oz. - 75¢.

TINARI'S CERTIFIED AFRICAN VIOLET SOIL - Sterilized and ready for immediate use. 3 lbs. - \$1.00, 5 lbs. - \$1.50.

All accessories sent postpaid.

May we suggest Christmas and fall holiday orders be placed now when shipping service and weather conditions are at their best. Do not wait until freezing weather and holiday rush. Order now and be prepared to give beautiful violet gifts grown to perfection.

"For

the finest in violets,

try Tinari's"



Free
catalog

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DEPT. A

BETHAYRES, PENNSYLVANIA